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WEDDED IN THE DARK

Or, WHO WAS HIS BRIDE? By H. E. Scott

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CHAPTER I.

"WEALTH THAT IS ARISTOCRACY."

"Well, what is it, Martha?"

"Please, mum, there's a young lady at the door with a letter for you."

"Why did you not bring it to me?"

"She says she must see you, mum."

"Must? Well, it seems I am never to finish this novel, but show her in," and with an air of disgust at being interrupted in her favorite amusement, Celia Barden arose to a sitting posture on the sofa. "A young lady with a letter, and must see me? Who can it be?"

At this moment the parlor door opened again, and Martha, the servant woman, ushered into the room a decidedly handsome young girl of scarcely more than seventeen years of age.

She was dressed in deep mourning and her general appearance denoted one in trouble.

"You wish to see me?" said Mrs. Barden.

"Yes, madam," replied the young girl; "I bear a letter to you from Reverend Morris Hoff, clergyman of Rockford."

"Indeed, I remember him. I attended the seminary at Rockford when a girl. Reverend Hope frequently held services at the institution. Give me the letter, pray. I presume the divine wishes me to donate to some object of charity?"

"Scarcely that, I think, madam."

"How should you know, pray?"

"I think, madam, the letter refers to myself."

"Oh, to be sure."

Here madam tore open the envelope and read the missive, and over her shoulders, readers, we will read it also:

"Mrs. Celia Barden: It has been many years since we met. When last we did, you were Miss Celia Carr, and I the young divine who sometimes held services at the seminary. Now we have each passed the meridian of life. I am still the poor parson you predicted I would ever remain, when on a certain occasion I dared to raise my eyes to you in hope that our two lives might become blended; nor have I forgotten your words on that occasion: 'Morris, I shall never become the wife of a poor man; and preachers are almost always poor. Being myself poor, I must marry a gentleman of wealth—while you, being also poverty-stricken, should seek a wealthy alliance.' I remember how frankly you spoke, and how fearlessly you did. You have not special eloquence, though you preach fairly good sermons. You will never become noted. Wealth alone can bring you to the front, and wealth alone can satisfy you; I shall wed wealth; my advice to you is to do likewise.' I told you then that in my opinion wealth did not constitute happiness, but you thought otherwise. Shortly after you became the bride of Joseph Barden, the porkpacker, the millionaire, while I have lived on all these years bearing your image in my heart and wondering if you were happy. Loving you, I could never wed another. I have lived alone for the Master and in His service. This world's goods I do not possess, but I have had little use for them, more than to alleviate the sufferings of others. I remember when last we met this you remarked, When I am wealthy, Morris, and you still the poor curate, preaching for $600, if the time comes that I can do you a service, call on me.' I hardly expected the time would come when I would ask a service of you; but it has, and it is this: The bearer of this missive is my niece, my only sister's child. She, with a brother, was recently left orphans. I am enabled to look after the training of the young man. Lilly wishes to perfect herself in music, and for that purpose visits Chicago. She is already well advanced, and must obtain pupils enough to defray her expenses. These two children are the only living beings in whose veins flows blood akin to mine. I love them both. You have your daughters, and if you could receive her into your home and let her teaching them compensate for the expense of her living, she might obtain from other pupils enough to defray her additional expenses while perfecting herself. With a hope that you may be able to do me this service, I remain, Mrs. Barden, still the poor curate, Morris Hope."

For fully five minutes after having read the letter through, Celia Barden sat looking at the lines on the page she held in her hand.

"Humph!" she thought. "Yes; I might have been a poor parson's wife instead of the mistress of this Michigan avenue mansion. My children might have been brought up 'mid surroundings of poverty instead of wealth. I do not regret my early decision. Morris has been a dolt to live on with memories of his first love when he might have married some lady of means and have risen out of his obscurity. He has refinement and culture, while Joe Barden, my husband, has wealth. Well, I chose it, and I am satisfied; but this girl, what shall I do about her? Lilly!"

The young girl, who had been standing while Mrs. Barden was reading the letter, started suddenly, and replied, "Madam."

"Sit there, Lilly, and tell me of yourself. Your uncle states in his letter that you desire to perfect yourself in music. He asks if I cannot receive you into my home, and as compensation for your room and board allow you to teach my daughters music while you are pursuing your studies. I trust you are well advanced?"

"My last teacher pronounced me to be so, madam. Indeed, he stated that he could carry me no further."

"Well, I have two daughters, Agnes, who is seventeen years of age."

"My own age, madam."

"Yes, well, and Cora fourteen. I think you can remain on the conditions your uncle proposes."

"Oh, I shall be glad, madam; I will do my best to please you. I could not bear to be a burden to my uncle, poor man. In bearing the expense of educating my brother on his small salary, he has now too heavy a burden."

"You will please me if you please the girls; try to be well by, have a thorough understanding, and I should wish you to remember that you come into my home as the instructress of my daughters in music, and not as their associate or companion. My daughters are my jewels. They are very handsome girls, and one day I expect they will make brilliant marriages. You can hardly expect them to receive you on an equal footing. You will have your own room and will either dine with the housekeeper or your meals will be sent to it.

"On these conditions you can remain. I need not tell you that I will permit of no familiarity on your part with my son."

"Madam," said Lilly, whose face had turned scarlet, "I merely seek an opportunity enabling me to perfect my studies. I care nothing of being an associate of your daughters; neither do I desire to be on familiar terms with your son. As for my meals, I would much prefer to take them in my room."

"Well, I presume my influence will procure you two or three other scholars in the vicinity. I think you can pay your way in perfecting yourself in music. Now, remember, all this is on condition that you are proficient enough to teach. I will hear you play after I have finished this novel. Will you strike that bell?"

Lilly did so, and in a few moments time Martha reentered the room.

"Martha, inform Mrs. Woods that I would like to see her."

"Yes, mum."

"Mrs. Woods is our housekeeper," said madam, as Martha disappeared; "but here she comes."

A fleshy, middle-aged woman entered the parlor.

"Mrs. Woods, I have engaged this young woman to teach Agnes and Cora music. She will hereafter remain in our household; at least for a time. You will arrange her a room. Let it be on the third floor; any one you desire."

"I Fear I should offend your mother."

"The room on the second floor, opposite that of the young ladies, is vacant since those two girls that were here visiting went back to Washington."

"Show her to the third floor, Mrs. Woods. She is not here as a companion to my daughters."

"Very well, madam. Come, miss."

Lilly, hardly able to restrain the sob that was struggling for utterance, followed Mrs. Woods from the door, and Celia Barden, picking up her novel, reclined again on the sofa.

"Well, that's arranged. I intended to get

some one; and better this girl than a male music teacher. I should have had to watch him, perhaps. I presume the girl is all well enough. She is handsome, too; but she can never pass in the circles my girls will. Wealth is the only thing that can pass current in the first society. Now, I presume the person thought I would take her right into my home as my girls' equal. And all because he was foolish enough to fall in love with her. It was a girl, sir.

"Poor fellow, he has never married. He was foolish to have remained single on my account. I never cared a straw for him. Still, I think he was more agreeable than Jo Harden is, or ever was. But money, money, that makes up for all other deficiencies, and somehow or other the more one gets the more one wants.

"Now, if the parson had had Joe Barden's wealth he could have been preaching to an aristocratic congregation long ago at a salary of $10,000, and have placed his nephew and niece in aristocratic society. Yes, and if Jo Harden had never accumulated more wealth than did the parson, where would he have been? Pshaw! he never would have been heard of. But, well, I would never have been Mrs. Jo Barden, Jo knows it, too. Society, that is wealth. Wealth, that is aristocracy. Almighty!" and the lady remained reading her novel.

CHAPTER II.

"LOVE IS A SHAM, CHILD."

Mrs. Woods led her charge up the carpeted walkway; through the hall on the second floor and to the one above.

"Now, Miss——"

"Nay, Mrs. Woods, Lilly Ray."

"A pretty name, and a pretty lass that bears it, too, I'll be bound. Well, I see that madam is bound you shall not occupy a position on an equality with my daughters, but do not feel bad. I will be your friend. I see you have had trouble. Now, this is the end room from the front I occupy. The front one is, I think, one of the most pleasant in the house. You can have it for your room if it suits you."

They soon entered it.

"How lovely," said Lily, "and such a fine view of the Lake. Oh, it is delightful, Mrs. Woods."

"I am glad it pleases you; and now where is your trunk?"

"I left that in Rockford. I was uncertain what remaining at all now I will telegraph for it."

"You have recently lost your mother or father——"

"I am an orphan, Mrs. Woods. I have lost them both and it is for the purpose of completing my musical education that I am here. A scholarship confident. But I have much to learn, as I shall rely on my ability in that direction to gain a livelihood."

"You are a brave girl. You will like Agnes and Cora, I think. They are quite as much like my mother. Cora is a gentle little thing, and is sure to win your heart. Mr. Barden is all business, and may at last stock yards or his office most of the time. He is a fine, good-hearted soul, and cares for his wife you would be treated as one of his children. But money, money, that has been his one crazy, I think. All she thinks of is having him add to his millions."

"I did not see the young ladies."

"No; Cora is at school. She will not be home until four o'clock and Agnes has gone shopping. Oh, you will see them this evening."

Mrs. Barden informs me that she has a pony——"

"Yes, Milton; he is now 12 years of age, and a handsome young man. It is his mother's desire that Milton shall one day be the wealthiest man in the world. No poor girl will catch Milton, if he ever becomes engaged want him, as he is rather disposed to be selfish, but he is not a bad young man."

"How long have you been in the family, Mrs. Woods?"

"Three years, Miss Ray."

"You have no family?"

"I am a widow. I have none. Well, I must leave you now. You can find the telegraph office where you came?"

"Yes; but as I am not in great haste, I think I will write a letter and mail it tonight."

Mrs. Woods took her departure, and Lilly, the orphan girl, opened her valise, hand-bag, took therefrom writing material, and wrote the lines to her uncle that would bring her trunk.

"A rather humiliating position I shall be in here," she thought, "but one that will enable me to relieve my uncle of the burden of my support, and advance in my studies. I am prepared to bear most anything. Mrs. Woods, I am sure, is pleasant, and I frequently she answered my question when I asked if she had a family. I am glad that I have none. Well, the world is full of troubles. How queer that Mrs. Barden thinks of nothing but money. And with all her husband's wealth, she is anxious for him to make more. Strange my uncle ever got acquainted with her. My dear father would have said, 'and you live in what would we care for wealth. How happy we were, and on so little—merely $600 a year.'

While Lilly was still cogitating, she heard voices emanating from the hall below, and as her room door was open she could distinguish the words spoken.

"What is she like, Ann Woods? Mother says she is no older than I."

"Yes; she is more agreeable and very pretty. She is an orphan."

"Yes; mother told me. I wonder if she is competent to teach music. Well, mother was sensible to send her upstairs, else she would have thought we were to be her associates. She would have soon made herself too forward when we had company, and mother says we are not to be familiar with her."

"I think she is a very refined young lady, and very brave to seek to gain her own livelihood."

"Oh, I dare say; but mother says she belongs to the lower class. Mother is proud, you know what that means. They never amount to anything."

"I don't know. Some of the first people of the land are not wealthy."

"Oh, I know; but I mean in society. You know what I mean, Aunt Woods—aristocratic society."

"Perhaps there are those who have no wish to enter aristocratic society, whatever what you would term aristocratic society?"

"What, can there be society where wealth and culture is the standard?"

"Culture, perhaps; but not wealth."

"Then I do not see how one society without wealth—that is a requirement that would be thought of by the parvenus."

"A requirement that admits boors and ignoramuses, however wealthy, has no place."

"Why, what would mother say to hear you talk to me like that?"

"I don't know, child; but it is the truth, as you will find out some day."

"I guess I will begin by accumulate wealth."

"Oh yes; of certain kinds, and sometimes fortune is stumbled upon, and often it is left by parents to their children, who accumulate it, and its present possessors have neither merit, talent, nor culture. Yet their wealth is the standard, and all that is demanded. No matter how they come by it; whether honestly or by fraud and fraud, by the rich, robbing corporations, or despoiling the public."

"Well, thank Heaven, father never made his wealth in any of those dishonest ways."

"Your father is not much of a society man."

"It is his own fault. Is he not worth ten millionaires?"

Mrs. Woods laughed. "Yes; and he commenced life sticking stamps."

"Why, Aunt, I will tell mother what you have said; yes, and papa, too."

"No, child, do not. Be honest at you, and tell you that thirty years ago he cut hogs' throats in Milwaukee, and that his father has not been ruined yet."

"I don't see how you dare speak of my father that way?"

"Oh, I like your father, and he knows it; besides, I am telling the truth. Wealth has not turned his head it it has your mother's. I think, though, that you and your music teacher; but I hear Cora coming. I will bring her down and introduce her."

The musical voice of the younger daughter sounded through the hall as she entered the room.

"I am tired of that pesky school. I wish I was an old maid, so that I should not have to more. Just think, I have three years of it yet."

"Yes; and what do you think, Cora. We have a new music teacher, and she has come here to live in the house. A young girl; no older than I."

"I don't want to hear of it. There will be some one to talk to now."

"We can be her companion of her."

"What is she here in the house for then?"

"Merely as our teacher, of course. She is an orphan, and entirely dependent on teaching for a livelihood."

"Poor thing. I know I shall like her; and I will make her promise to sing for me, and I guess papa won't object, if she does have to work for a living."

Lilly sat wondering what relation Mrs. Woods bore to the family; Agnes had called her aunt, but Cora had called her Ann. Perhaps spin-spoken woman was Mrs. Barden's sister?

Here she heard that lady ascending the stairs, and she soon entered the room.

"Come, Miss Ray, I have to wish to introduce you to your pupils."

They soon entered the next room on the floor below.

"Young ladies, Miss Ray, your new music teacher."

Lilly saw in Agnes a young miss that must have closely resembled her mother at her age; of nearly her own stature; black hair and eyes, and with a haughtily beautiful look that played about her lips, quite handsome.

The younger girl, Cora, was a pretty blue-eyed, golden-haired miss, who little resembled either of them. She ran to Miss Ray's side at once, and clasped her hand.

"I am glad you have come, that mamma secured a young lady. I know I shall be pleased with you, and we can study. And I shall learn faster than I would with a disagreeable old maid or a man. Oh, you are welcome. Is she not, Agnes?"

"Certainly, Miss Ray; but, sister, any one must be welcome who your mother selects."

Lilly could but note the difference of her reception by the girls.

Clearly Agnes wished to give her to understand that there was to be no familiarity with her, while the gentle Cora was inclined at once to become her companion and friend.

Lilly had the letter she had written to her uncle in her hand, and after a moment's conversation with the girls she remarked that she would go and mail it.

"I will accompany you," cried Cora, "There is a mail box just a block below," and she seized her hat.

A warning look from her elder sister was thrown away on her. Of course, Lilly could not decline her company, so the two girls left the room and descended the stairs together.

As they reached the hall below, Mrs. Barden, hearing their footsteps, called, "Cora, where?"

"Yes, mamma," and the two girls advanced to the parlor door. "I am going with Miss Ray to the mail box on the corner. I am so glad you have given us a young lady music teacher, I know I shall love her."

Well, Miss Ray can surely find the mail box. I desire you to remain in the house."

Lilly hesitated, and Lilly certainly felt rather indignant, but she replied: "I assure you, Mrs. Barden, that the letter was entirely voluntary on Miss Cora's part. I presume I can find the box. I could not decline her company."

"No, I understand. My child, you are too forward."

"But, mamma, Miss Ray would not be disgraced by my going to accompany her. Would you, Miss Ray?"

"Certainly not, Miss Cora; but your mother would not assign me for your companion," said Lilly, her face coloring.

"Mamma, I command it. Miss Ray, Cora, you will remain with me. I wish to talk with you."

Cora indignantly threw her hat on the center table, and with tears in her eyes, hastened through the hall, thinking, "I must bear all humiliation for the sake of what he has gained. What a cruel poverty is!"

Meanwhile, after Lilly had closed the outer door behind her, Mrs. Barden, turning to her daughter, said, "Now, Cora, this young woman I have employed as your music teacher. You must remember that she is employed for society you do not like. Whether she remains here or not depends entirely upon yourself. I desire you do not wish you to become familiar with her. She is poor, and has no nice. And how can I help it? Agnes, now is just like you, but I am not."

Agnes has the pride of her station. You will have when you get older. I have great ambitions for my girls. I expect you each to marry millionaires."

"I will marry for love, or for love," said the pretty miss, and she gave her head a toss as she started for the door.

"Agnes, I am not done."

"I don't believe it. Didn't you marry papa for love, mamma?"

"Why, yes, of course." Cora had disappeared. "Love of his money."

CHAPTER III.

CELIA BARDEN'S AMBITION.

Sarah Barden was a Wisconsin girl when she had said to Agnes, "Your father commenced life sticking stamps." Sarah Barden at 20 was a beauty.

Joseph Barden was the son of a Wisconsin farmer. He had but an ordinary country school education; but was smart, energetic, ambitious. He had a trade. He had left his country home with his gripsack and tool chest, and within three years he took his fortune.

Arrived in Milwaukee, he found that his cash capital had been reduced to exactly 50 cents, but with a firm determination that it should never be less. he went to work the very morning after his arrival there with a firm of the name of house of Judd & Plankington for the sum of three dollars a day.

Joseph Barden's two dollars never became less.

At the expiration of two years, he, with a partner, started a packing house in Milwaukee. In three years he had bought out his interest for a good round sum, removed to Chicago, and became a prominent figure in the stock yards district. Here he was soon on the high road to become a millionaire.

He was nothing of a society man, but his wealth and prospects caused designing mamas to set their caps for him. He avoided them all, but exactly seven years, to a day, after the departure of Joseph Barden and John Plankington, he encountered on the cars Sarah Wisconsin, Miss Celia Barden, Celia Carr.

This was this scarcely ten days after Celia had rejected the proposal of the lumberend Morris Hope. The passenger coaches were crowded, and Joseph Barden's eyes as seat by the side of Miss Celia. Now, being a gentleman, he was not an agreeable man of Joseph, and he had soon entered into a conversation with the young lady. This conversation led to a knowledge on her part that her companion was Joseph Barden, the packing house king, and Joseph Barden had learned that he was talking to Miss Carr, the daughter of a Rockford banker, who was en route to Chicago to visit friends.

He further learned that she have; an educated wife I should have; I don't tend to be kidnaped by any designing female. I will guard my heart well. And this young lady that fortune has thrown in my way——

Celia thought: This man I have heard of before. He is evidently quite uncultured, but wealthy. Now, I think might make him do agreeable. Celia Barden—Mrs. Joseph Barden. The name has an aristocratic sound. I must see him again. And so agreeable did Miss Celia make herself that ere the train had reached Chicago the young packer had asked her permission to call.

It was not that the permission was granted, with a result that ere two months later Celia Carr's ambition had been realized, and she had become the wife of a wealthy man, and her way was open towards aristocratic society, a society of which she realized that wealth only was the passport.

Joseph Barden had secured an educated and cultured wife.

Celia securing one who had no designs to entrap him because of his wealth, he had failed; nevertheless, they were not very unhappily mated.

Celia had secured what she desired, true, she had no love for her husband; but she argued that this was not necessary, and she could polish him up so that she would not be ashamed of him. He was not disagreeable; he would be little at home, and would not interfere with her ambition.

Joseph was satisfied. He had married an educated woman; she would be the mistress of his home, and he would be proud of her. She could have her own way for all of him, she could not go wrong.

He built a fine mansion on Michigan avenue, and there after twenty-three years of wedded life we find the once poor Joseph's wealth had grown into millions, and was ever growing. His manner, truly, had become more polished and he dressed in deference to his wife's wishes, but a keen that would little denote a pork-packer. But he was still Joseph Barden. Good-natured, fully and unassuming, fond of his wife and children, of whom we have seen there were three.

Now, Sarah Woods, the housekeeper, who had entered Mrs. Barden's service before, was a sister of Joseph Barden, and three years his junior. She had married a poor man, a mechanic, who had died left her nothing but poverty. Her brother was the first to whom she applied for help she had come. She was a good soul, but not of a type to find favor in aristocratic society; nevertheless, she was Joseph Barden's sister, his wife could not refuse less than have her installed as housekeeper, for the duties of which position she was well-fitted, and where she could attend sufficiently in the background to please the mistress of the mansion.

Aunt Sarah was a woman of good, sound, practical common sense. She regretted her brother's wife for what she was; but her notions of aristocratic society and the manner in which she was bringing up her children disgusted her. Yet, as her sister-in-law's housekeeper, she had little or no influence.

Now, when Lilly Ray returned from mailing her letter she encountered a young man at the gate who was just on the point of entering the same. Seeing that her intent was to do so, too, he raised his hat, looked at her admiringly, and held the gate open while she passed in. He then followed her slight figure up the stone walk and into the house.

"What a sylph! What a beauty!" he thought, as she sped up the stairway. Who can she be? My heart goes pit-a-pat at the sight of her. She is evidently the darling of a brilliant match for me. Now, that is the style of my fancy. Form like a reed, red lips, and what eyes; what eyes! Hair! What a mass, and as black as a raven's wing. Oh, ho! Milton, you have a poor heart at your father's own door. Surely, I have not dreamed that I have found what I can it mean? She ran right upstairs as though she was at home. Servant, perhaps. Well, I shall soon learn," and Milton entered the parlor where his mother was still reading her novel.

"Ah, my son, you are home!"

"Yes, mother, and a pretty girl; in fact, a handsome girl, entered the gate before me."

"Pshaw, Milton! only a poor unfortunate who must earn her own way in the world. She is an orphan and has come to me for by an acquaintance in Rockford. I have employed her as my daughters' music teacher."

"Employed her? Why, really, she has an aristocratic look. I thought she was a society girl."

"Far from it. She wishes to keep up her study, while she gives the girls lessons. She will rely on the field of music to gain her livelihood. She is not ashamed, and don't fall in love with her; merely treat her as a lady. She will be here, and I have marked out for you, my son, as you know. Your future must come from one of the most aristocratic families in the land."

"My ambition is not much less than your own, mother. In that line, I may have inculcated it in me since I was a child; but I handsome girl and this new music teacher I never beheld. Who is she, mother?"

"As I told you, an orphan. Her name is Lilly Ray."

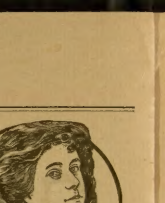
"Lilly Ray, Lilly Ray," repeated the young man. "A charming name."

"Not an aristocratic name, and but where is your father?"

"I left him at the office, mother, but he will soon be along now. I must get ready for tea," and repeating over in his mind the name "Lilly Ray, Lilly Ray," he hastened to his room on the second floor.

Celia Barden's eyes watched his figure as he bounded away.

"My Milton," she thought, "what a noble, handsome boy. Oh, he will set the mammas of aristocratic society planning for his capture. Yes; and the fair girls as well; but I have him well in hand. The wealthiest.



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When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

WAS REFUSED LIFE INSURANCE.

Rejected on Account of "Coffee Heart."

Life insurance companies have fully established the fact that the use of coffee causes an organic derangement of the heart, shortening the long breathing and fluttering. For this reason habitual coffee drinkers are refused insurance. Mr. Frank Hamilton, a well-known merchant of White's Creek, Tenn., proprietor of a large store there, says:—"Three years ago I was examined for life insurance and to my surprise was rejected because my heart action was at times out of place 15 beats in 60.

"I stated several times to doctors and was invariably asked by them 'Do you drink ardent spirits? use tobacco? or drink coffee?' to the first I answered 'Very little' to the second 'Oh' to the last 'Yes' and they would all say 'Quit coffee.'

"I determined to do this, I had read about Postum Cereal Coffee and bought and used it and I liked it as well as the best of real coffee and as a result of its use in place of coffee I find myself without a skip in my heart action and I can get insurance on my life cheaper by 25 per cent (notwithstanding the advance in age) than I could when I first commenced using Postum." Name furnished by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich.

the very wealthiest, shall become his wife. The wealthiest man in the world is what I wish my boy to be. He must lead a young lady to the altar who will inherit millions. His father is still piling them up, and some day, some day Milton will fall heir to his business. The girls are bound to be sought by wealthy men."

Lilly, upstairs in her room, was thinking: "That then is the son, Milton. My, what a handsome young man! How he blushed when he looked at me. I wonder if I blushed, too? He it is whose mother dreams shall become the wealthiest man in the land. I wonder if he has her high, aristocratic nose. I suppose I will meet him often; but, then, I will be looked on as little more than a servant in the family."

At six o'clock a carriage rolled up to the door, and Joseph Barden descended therefrom.

Lilly saw a stout, thick-set man, cane in hand, with his high hat on the back of his head, pass slowly up the walk.

"What a dear, old aristocrat," she thought, as she heard him enter the door.

At the same moment the voice of Cora reached her ears: "There is papa! there is papa!" and she heard a scramble on the floor below.

"For Heaven's sake, Cora, be more dignified and modest. One would think you had not seen him in a month of Sundays."

"Published accounts have signalled; I have not seen my papa since this morning," and down the stairs ran Cora and right into her father's arms below.

"Ah, ha! here is my treasure. Worth more than all the rest," exclaimed the packer, as he gave her a hearty kiss. "How are you feeling, my dear?"

"I am well, papa. We have a new music teacher. Oh, such a pretty girl. Aunt Woods gave her a room on the third floor. She is to live here and give us music lessons, as you know. She is quite modest; but mamma says we are not to make a companion of her. She is one of the poverty-stricken kind, and cannot pass in aristocratic society. Is that right, papa?"

"Oh, that is me, Cora, your mother knows. She has her own ideas about aristocratic society, and I confess I have too much of it. A lot of duffers without brains half of them."

"Joseph, is that the way to speak before your daughter? Duffers! Duffers! For Heaven's sake, Cora, leave the room!"

"Ah, Celia, you came onto us unawares. Of course you know what is best for the children's advancement and happiness; but duffers—yes, I repeat it, duffers I am tolerably hungry about now. I have a piece of good news for you, though."

"What, Joseph? What is it?"

"I got out of that long pork deal today, and beat Armour by a hundred thousand! I lost?"

"Lost, lost, no, no, Joseph! you did not lose, for you said you had good news."

"Well, I am always on the rise when speculating on the market."

"No, but, Joseph, this time; I know the pork was going your way."

"You don't be alarmed. I came out of that deal $500,000 ahead; but I've been three years at it."

"Five hundred thousand dollars ahead? Oh, Joseph, you are a real genius at making money. I am really sorry you, Joseph."

"Well, come on, here goes."

"Heaven's sake, don't be so vulgar. You surprise me. There," and the madam's thin lips pouted those of her husband. "I am proud of you. You will yet be the wealthiest man in Chicago."

"Worth much now to satisfy most anybody. What good does wealth do you? You don't appear to be alarmed. I came out of that deal $500,000 ahead; but I've been three years at it."

"Five hundred thousand dollars!

HAND AND CORD

OR

THE RAJAH'S TREASURE

By T. C. Harbaugh

In the center of the room stood Clarice.

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CHAPTER V.

A BOLT FROM THE BLUE.

The first blow had fallen.

I had dreaded its effect on Sir Roger, but to my astonishment and joy he steeled himself and met it with the bravery of his ancestors.

If Nana Sahib was in England, and there seemed no doubt of it after the tragedy at Castle Fade, it was likely that he had first struck his initial blow.

"My boy," said Sir Roger to me the day after the and burial at the old Castle, "henceforth I live for but two things—the happiness and protection of my child and the death of this monster in human form. Nana Sahib will have spun his trail an avenger who can kill as surely as he can. I shall not give up until I stand and look down into the dying eyes of this fiend. I have planned his end, carefully planned it, not a particular missing. He shall perish with the gems around him. He shall gasp upon them as he dies and the world shall think of but two things—Sir Roger's revenge and the death of Nana Sahib."

I looked at the old soldier amazed. He was not mad, though within the last few days he had passed through enough to turn his brain. His color had come back and his eyes did not quiver.

Clarice, who had inherited her father's courage, bore up better than we had expected. She was devotedly attached to her mother, but she did not mourn openly as others do, but deep for the recesses of her heart. It was there would ever be an altar sacred to the one that had gone.

Mowbray did not come down from London. Though the death and burial of Lady Temple had filled a column in the papers, he did not come with his offers of condolence, but some ten clerk came.

"Misfortunes come not singly," said he, taking a letter from his desk and handing it to me. "This is the last thing I looked for. It will show you, Clifford, how foolish father can be."

Wondering what could have brought forth such remarks, I took the letter and noticed that it bore the postmark of New York. It was dated about ten days previously, and was not lengthy.

But my blood seemed to become cold as I read it with Sir Roger watching me, as I suspected. It ran as follows, for, after reading it once, I never had occasion to peruse it again in order to remember its contents:

"Sir Roger Temple, Bart.—My Dear Sir: Three days since I became of age and opened the packet which my father left me on his deathbed. You have not forgotten him, the friend of your youth, the companion of more than one arduous campaign, Chaifant Dayne. I was surprised at the contents of the sealed packet. It contained the compact between my father and yourself to the effect that when I reached my twenty-first year I could claim the hand of your daughter, Clarice. The compact still holds good, and I can see no reason why I should not be the first to abrogate it. In compliance with the terms of the compact I shall sail for England on the next steamship and will have the pleasure of calling on you immediately upon my arrival. Please present my compliments to Miss Clarice, whom you have doubtless informed of the marriage compact, and assure her for yourself the best wishes of your old friend's son.

AUBREY DAYNE."

Some moments elapsed before I could look up from that accursed letter and confront Sir Roger. A dead silence filled the library. I had never heard of this strange compact, had never heard Sir Roger speak of Chaifant Dayne, and if Clarice knew anything of the matter, she had never hinted of it to me.

"My boy, I wish that letter had never reached me," said Sir Roger, feeling that he must speak. "To tell the truth, while I have not forgotten that very foolish compact, I had thought that this young man, Aubrey Dayne, was dead. I knew that his father had passed to the Great Beyond, and years ago a report of his son's death also reached me. I therefore thought that the whole matter of mine connected with the matter; but it seems I am still bound."

My heart seemed to stand still. I loved Clarice with all the ardent love of young manhood, and was quite sure the sacred passion was reciprocated. True, I had never made an open declaration of love, but I was certain that when I saw fit to do so I would not be repulsed, for our thoughts had always seemed to run in the same groove.

But now the dream was about to be dissipated. I had been led to the top of the mountain of love, and, after being permitted to look down upon the paradise below, a darkening cloud had swept across my sky and in the distance were the forked lightnings of destruction. I had never seen this Aubrey Dayne, but I already hated him. What right had he to come between me and the object of my affections? On the other hand, what right had I, after that letter, to ask Sir Roger to regard me as a suitor for the hand of his only child? She belonged to Aubrey Dayne by sacred promise—a promise that had been witnessed under oath, and the word of her father was pledged—a word which I knew he never broke.

I felt like tearing the letter into pieces and hurling defiance into the teeth of the man who was even now on the ocean coming back to old England to claim his own. I would poison Clarice's mind against him, I would stand between him and the fruition of his ardent hopes; I would—

But why speculate in madness? Why add another grief to the old man's burdens? Already he had enough.

I handed the letter back, saying, for I felt that I must make some comment:

"No doubt this letter is a surprise. I did not know that such a compact existed."

"I wish it had run out by limitation, or by some other means. But, as you see, it still exists in black and white."

"And of course you will keep your part of it?"

I tried to be as unconcerned as possible, though I fear my agitation betrayed me.

"My boy," said Sir Roger, kindly, "I temple never breaks a promise. From time immemorial we have kept ours, however much the keeping went against our better judgment."

I said no more, but rose and walked across the room.

"Does Miss Clarice know?" I suddenly asked, turning upon Sir Roger.

"Her mother told her once, I believe."

Why hadn't she told me? Why hadn't she acquainted me with the secret and kept me out of the meshes of love? A word would have sufficed.

"Don't blame Clarice, my boy," said Sir Roger, as if he had read my thoughts. "The child is no nowise to blame. She loves you. I know it. I have not been blind to all things."

"But," cried I, who belonged to him. She is the betrothed of the stranger—the man who is now on the ocean, if not in London."

"In London!"

I started, if Aubrey Dayne was in London, why was I at Castle Fate?

"I shall bid you good-by," I said, a moment later, halting in front of Sir Roger. "I am going away."

He looked at me in utter surprise. I caught a new light in his dark eyes.

"So you are going to desert me in the hour of my grief and trial?" said he.

I could not reply that appeal. Sir was Clarice's father; he was the only remnant of Nana Sahib. I could not think of turning him over without a defense to the tender mercies of this terrible wretch.

"No, I will stand by you to the end, whatever it be!" I exclaimed. "But just now I must go away for a spell. I am going to London."

"That's right!" cried Sir Roger. "Go and find out what you can. I will see Mowbray on all things, see Mowbray. Don't forget."

And an hour later I was traveling toward London.

CHAPTER VI.

THE LAIR OF THE INDIAN TIGER.

Of course I would see Mowbray, but there was another person I hoped to meet as well.

Aubrey Dayne had come before me like a storm-cloud just when I thought my sky was clear. His letter from America had overcast the heavens above me and blotted out the sunshine on the ground beneath. I had no right to complain, but somehow why did I curse my foolish compact while I was hurried over the ground in London.

My first care after reaching the city was to obtain the services of a detective. I discovered that a liner had recently come in from America and that many of its passengers had reached London. I went to the large hotels, where I eagerly scanned the registers in search of Aubrey Dayne.

But my search was without results and at last I gave up in despair.

As I had that gentleman's card, I looked once more at it and called a cab. The day had vanished, and the lights of London glared at me from every side as I leaned back among the cushions and ordered the cabby to pull up in front of Mowbray's quarters in the Strand.

I reviewed the whole situation as I was driven toward my destination. I thought of Lady Temple's death, of the fate of the Rajah's treasures upon which I had looked, of the terrible end of Nana Sahib, of Mowbray, the soldier, who had just returned from the Indian fields, of a thousand other things.

When I alighted from the cab I made it glanced up at the house and paid my fare. Then, telling the man to wait, I ascended the narrow corner and waited for me, I bounded up the steps and pulled the bell.

In a moment the door was opened by a woman who looked at me out of one eye, for she possessed but one that was real, and the artificial organ did not match its mate.

"Major Jack Mowbray," said I.

"Second floor, first door to the right. Think he's at home, but had better see."

These simple directions and the observation aroused me, and as I past the woman I ran up the flight and kneeled at the door designated.

I heard a noise beyond the portal and soon one said, gruffly:

"Come in!"

I pushed the door open and stood before the form of Cawnpore.

He was leaning back in a chair smoking a huge pipe, while a mangy-looking dog, minus one ear, was trying to become familiar. Mowbray blew away a cloud of smoke at sight of me and kicked the brindle animal across the room.

"By Jove!" he cried. "I was thinking of you yesterday. Wondered if you were still in the Castle. Just got in, eh?"

I nodded and dropped into the only unoccupied chair in the room, which was not very clean nor odorless.

"Tell me," snapped Mowbray, leaning forward as an eager light came into his eyes, "is Lady Temple really dead?"

"And buried, sir," said I.

"What does Sir Roger think now?"

"He believes that Nana Sahib is in London."

"He does, eh? Have you some time on your hands, young man?"

"Plenty of it, sir," I answered, wondering what was to come next.

"So have I. I'll talk to you about the affair at Castle Fate as we travel. Where's your cab?"

"Down at the nearest corner."

"Good! You're businesslike. We'll take it for a little distance."

Mowbray put on his hat, looked into the sideboard a moment and pulled out a bottle from which he helped himself, saying that he had just enough for one swallow, though it was the largest swallow I had ever seen, and then turned abruptly upon me.

"We're off now. I want to convince you," he said.

We descended the stairs, not meeting the one-eyed woman below, and walked to my cab. Entering, Mowbray leaned forward and gave directions:

"Marlybone. Stop just at the mouth of the street that crooks so much. You know."

In another moment we were being driven from Mowbray's quarters and for some minutes I lolled over the streets of London with the weird lights nodding and blinking like the eyes of ten thousand demons. My companion sat silent for a spell, and then his hand fell upon my arm. Like the owl, he seemed to have the faculty of seeing in the dark.

"He believes it now, does he?" I heard him chuckle. "Old Temple believes that Nana is in London. Well, the proof was terrible, but the end Rajah will furnish more if not checked."

"What do you mean?"

"He took the wife first. He lops off a limb at a time."

"My God! You don't mean——"

I could not complete the sentence.

"He leaves the real victim till the last," continued Mowbray.

"Then Clarice will be the next!" I gasped.

"Lady Temple had fit the part. Clarice is but one other life between the Nana and Sir Roger."

"We must find this man!" I cried. "We must come between Nana Sahib and this pure, beautiful girl.

"I see. You love her."

"As I love my life. But she does not belong to me. Still, I would save her from the cord of the Indian Thug."

"We can try."

Ten minutes later we pulled up, and Major Mowbray opened the door and we alighted. I was in a part of London I seldom visited. Nothing ever occurred to take me to Marlybone, and the houses were strange to me. I looked up at the four corners of the streets where we had stopped, wondering what was to be the next adventure.

"This way," said Mowbray, touching my sleeve. "If I am not mistaken I will show you something."

He led me across the street and turned into a little alley, for such it was beside. We went down this dark thoroughfare for some time, when Mowbray opened a gate and we entered a house after ascending a garden.

To all appearance the house was not tenanted. We crept up a dark stairs to a corridor, which we threaded, and after awhile came to a door which could not have been in the place we first entered.

"Now, my boy, you shall see something," said Mowbray. "This is the house of the thugs."

"Not the thugs of India?" I breathlessly asked.

"The same."

At Mowbray's suggestion we removed our shoes and stood in the dark, stockinged only. Suddenly I became aware that I was looking at what at first seemed a little window cut in the wall, but which in reality was a secret turp made by the sliding aside of a secret door. Mowbray pushed me before him.

I looked into what was a large apartment finished in oriental style. At one end of the room was a cross-like structure, elegantly trimmed with elephant heads on either side. At the extremities of the cross were clusters of lights shed their influence round the room, illuminating to every nook and covering me what I thought did not exist outside of India.

Nothing escaped my observation, but all at once I became aware that there were no weapons, and there was now no doubt in my mind that I was in a thug's house.

"Wait," said Mowbray, as if reading my thoughts, "and you will not have to wait long for the proofs."

The last word had scarcely left his tongue when a door at the other end of the room opened and a man entered the room. I could scarcely believe my eyes, but I uttered, and could have sealed our doom.

The newcomer was not very tall, but his figure was perfection, and the gorgeous robes he wore, robes of oriental richness, sprinkled with jewels that sparkled as he came, dazzled my vision.

He walked like a king, but with the noiseless tread of the tiger.

This is the tiger of the Indian jungle," said a low voice at my ear. "Now in the man England would give her treasury for—just to look at him. I have seen him before, to my sorrow. He belongs to me; he belongs to Jack Mowbray. Watch him! That demon is Nana Sahib!"

CHAPTER VII.

I MEET AUBREY DAYNE.

Looking for the origin of the voice, of I had a good view of the scene before me.

I forgot the rich Indian rugs that covered the floor, the rich chamber, the gorgeous draperies that concealed the walls, and the cunning devices that had combined to make the house like structure. I saw nothing but the man in the long, flowing robes, the man who, by seeing him, I recalled all I had heard about the demon of Cawnpore and the man who, either personally or through some of his emissaries, had sent Lady Temple out of the world.

What would he do? Would he soon be joined by some of his dark-skinned henchmen, the fiends of thuggeism, or had he come to that place to renew his oath and to worship at the feet of Brahma or Vishnu?

Suddenly I felt a hand on my arm and a voice said at my ear:

"Come! No more tonight, Balfour."

Then I was almost dragged from the spot, hurried across the room and pushed through the labyrinthine passages by which we had reached the spot, and thence into the street below. I did not have time to remonstrate.

Once out of the building and again under the myriad lights of London, I was hustled into a cab by Mowbray climbing in after me, and in another moment we were off.

Not a word had been spoken since we left the strange house, now one of the temples of India transplanted in Christian England. Mowbray kept his own counsels and I tried to remember the locality of that mysterious house. I had resolved it so back, if possible, and get another look at Nana Sahib.

When the cab drew up in front of Mowbray's lodgings he jumped out and looked at me.

"Remember!" he cried. "Nana Sahib belongs to Mowbray—for vengeance! Woe to the hand that comes between me and that monster!"

Then he told the "cabby" to drive me to my hotel, and I was moving along once more, bewildered over the strange events through a genuine London fog.

As the reader will imagine, there was little sleep for me that eventful night. I tossed on my couch till I was all in a feverish sweat, and when morning came I had not closed my eyes. What would Sir Roger say when I should report my adventure? Again and again I thought of the Nana and of Aubrey Dayne.

In the madness of my love for Clarice I wished that the liner that carried him would go to the bottom of the great deep, I wished that he might never see England, for was he not coming to rob me of the woman I loved? What would all my passion avail me if he should ever demand the fulfillment of that infamous compact? I felt that Sir Roger considered himself bound by the pledge, despite the years that had intervened. He would bow his head in sorrow, for I felt deep in my heart that he liked me and that, I supposed, he would not stand between me and the culmination of my desires.

The morning when I came down into the foyer of the Langham I was handed a telegram from the desk.

"When did this come?" I asked.

"Just a few moments ago. I was about to send it up—"

I turned away and tore open the envelope. The message was from Sir Roger and was very brief. In a second I had read as follows:

"Acquaint the N with the jewel secret if you find him."

That was all. I looked up astonished. My heart for a moment seemed to stand still.

Was Sir Roger demented? Had his senses suddenly left the old soldier? Did he really want Nana Sahib to know that he was the robber of his treasures? That would be to invite the Nana down to Castle Fate, and what would happen, he knew? Hand and cord! Perhaps the tragic death of Clarice, for had not Mowbray said that she "always lopped off the limbs of the trees before he struck at the parent trunk." Then another thought flashed through my mind.

I could see differently now Sir Roger wanted to tell the Nana to Castle Fate. Not one of his dark accomplices, but the despot himself. He had sworn that Nana Sahib should perish in sight of his treasures, and how could he die thus if not in the Castle?

I was thinking over the telegram when I heard the quick speak the name of Dayne. I turned as if a serpent had hissed at my heels.

Before me stood a handsome young man in the freshness of early manhood, tall, but a little sparely built. His eyes were a deep animated brown and he was dressed in a manner that showed his taste for good garments.

I kept back the thought of anger that rose to my lips and, stepping forward to him, said:

"Mr. Aubrey Dayne, is it not?"

"Yes, sir."

"I am Clifford Balfour."

"Glad to know you," he exclaimed, taking my hand and shaking it cordially after the manner of Americans. "I am indeed pleased to meet you, sir. I came in late last night after a rough voyage, and do not feel quite rested as yet."

"You will not find Sir Roger in London. He is down at Castle Fate, he writes."

"Then you know—"

"Yes. He is expecting you. He received your letter and I had the—the honor of perusing it. There are no secrets there."

I saw a new spring in Dayne's eyes.

"And how is Miss Clarice?"

"She is very well. I can congratulate you, Mr. Dayne. It is quite a little romance."

How hard it went with me to utter those words! As I did so the form of Clarice rose before me in her radiant beauty, and I thought I heard her voice setting in a gentle but firm remonstrance.

Aubrey Dayne put his arm through mine and, leading me to a secluded part of the lobby, asked me to give him the news. I complied. Truth to tell, I of the Castle. I complied. Truth to tell, I had already begun to like this young man. I thought to myself that if I were to have a rival I would prefer him of all men.

I told him about the tragic death of Lady Temple. He listened like a man in a maze of wonder. When I mentioned the name of Nana Sahib he started and looked into my eyes.

"We will hunt this monster down," he said.

"You and Mr. Balfour and my father fought against the Nana in India and often told me of his atrocities. Describe him to me, please."

I did so at length, for I had just looked upon him. Aubrey listened attentively.

It is strange. When I came last night a Hindoo was standing yonder at the desk—a man who answers your description to a T. Could it have been that monster?"

"It is not likely that you saw the Nana," said I.

"But look yonder. That is the man I saw!"

I looked up and followed the direction of Aubrey Dayne's gaze.

A handsome Hindoo was walking through the lobby.

"My God! 'tis he," I exclaimed, clutching Dayne's arm. "That is the despot of the jungles. That is Nana Sahib!"

Dayne and I looked at the man in suppressed silence. I felt my blood tingle in my veins; all the tiger in my make-up surged to the fore and I could hardly keep from rushing upon the little Indian and throttling him in the presence of a score of people.

Then I thought of Sir Roger's telegram. No, I would see what he got it, but not then. I would smuggle it to him in some manner, leave the tidings at the desk for him when he went away from the hotel. Aubrey's eyes were flashing sparks of fire.

"He has the treat of the leopard," said he, watching the Indian. "Can it be possible that Nana Sahib has ventured to England when she offers thirty thousand pounds for his head?"

"He knows no fear. He is a fatalist," said I. We saw the Indian pass from the hotel and vanish in the street.

"I'm glad I've met you," said Dayne, rising. "I want you to stand up with me at my wedding."

At his wedding! I bit my lips and told him that I should be glad to do so, but it was a lie.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE THUG COMES FOR CLARICE.

That same day I left a mysterious letter at the desk for Nana Sahib, whom I discovered was masquerading under the name of Pundu Dunt, a slight changing of his real name, Dhunda Punt.

Hindoos were not a curiosity in London. In fact, there was quite a little colony of them in the city; they had their temples where they worshiped the gods of India and practiced their mysterious rites, even in the eyes of the whites.

They usually wore their turbans and at times went out arrayed in the gorgeousness of their rank, but in obscure quarters of London they lived squalidly, now and then seeking the light, and, as the whole city thought, piled opium calling with a few of their own kind.

Aubrey Dayne evinced a desire to go down to Castle Fate with me to accompany him. I accepted, for I desired to know what Clarice thought of him and how he would be received there. So, the following day, without calling again upon Mowbray, whom I now feared as much as I hated, I found myself in a railway carriage with Aubrey Dayne opposite.

We were set down at the little station, where we found a dog-cart in the rain, for I had telegraphed ahead to prepare the inmates of the Castle for our coming.

The greeting which Sir Roger extended to Aubrey was cordial, for he was the son of his friend and comrade, and the old chief were soon tete-a-tete in the library.

Leaving them there I strolled out among the shrubbery and was communing with myself, for I had much to think about, when I heard a light footfall behind me. I could have guessed who was there, and when I turned I stood face to face with Clarice.

"I thought you might come here," she said musing. "You are troubled, Clifford."

"Troubled?" I echoed. "Clarice, if it were not for one thing I would tonight quit Castle Fate forever."

"But we cannot spare you," she exclaimed. "Have you not told me this morning he called me into the library and told me about Aubrey Dayne's coming? I never listened before to such a strange narrative. I have read of romances of that kind, but never to be a part of one myself mystifies and astonishes me."

"Then you are willing—"

"Papa is a man of his word," she interrupted softly, but there was a ring in her voice that showed a soldier, and as a soldier he would not flinch from any sacrifice."

"Of course not," said I. "Sir Roger is in duty bound, Clarice, in a way, but I admire of him, and love it I should give you grief he will do it in sorrow."

A light which I could describe came into her lustrous eyes and for a moment she averted them.

"Clifford, whatever comes of this there must be no rebellion against papa on your part. He is a man of honor in all in all now. You know that mother is gone and I cannot go to her with my sorrows as I was wont to do."

"Then I trust, Clarice, that you will be happy. That thought consoles me."

"It has not come off yet," she broke in. "Mr. Aubrey Dayne may have designs on my heart, I was without hope. What, Aubrey Dayne give me a thought of love who had not sealed to him years before when both of them were mere children! I shall not have laughed at the question."

"Now let me go and meet him," she went on. "As I have said, the compact has not been carried out yet. But did you meet Jack Merton on the road?"

"Yes. I had quite an adventure with him, one which I shall relate to you at some more opportune time. Have any strange men been seen about the Castle since you returned?"

"Only one, to see him last night down in the grounds, looking up at my window. It frightened me, but I put it down to fancy, I think so."

"You must not expose yourself, Clarice," said I. "Though you are to become the bride of Aubrey Dayne, not for the world would I see any harm befall you."

She looked her thanks through eyes that proclaimed a depth of love which she had hinted at, and together we walked back to the mansion house.

The greeting which Clarice gave Aubrey Dayne when she entered the library surprised me somewhat, but I said not. It was so unaffected, so jealousy free, so much like a sister's welcoming as it did from the depths of her soul, that I truly loved her the more admired and gratulated Aubrey Dayne in secret.

When I got a chance to speak to me, Dayne I detailed my adventures in London to him. He listened with but few questions, only now and then interpolating a remark, but he was deeply stirred.

I also delivered my message for the Nana?" he said.

"I left it at the desk of the Langham for him."

Then he will get it and will come!"

His eyes glowed like two wee agger, intensely so, and I saw he his hands open and shut as if he had them around the throat of the dark despot of his arch enemy.

Aubrey Dayne was the man to make himself agreeable to the tender sex. He had early schooled among the heathen of America, and their English sisters differ but little from them.

During the next three days I spent most of my time with Sir Roger. I wished to give the young people an opportunity to become acquainted in order that they might discover each other's likes and dislikes. I only hoped that Aubrey Dayne would not find his idol in Clarice, though I knew that was only hoping against hope. What ideal could be more bewitching than Clarice Temple?

The third night there occurred an incident that was so dark and bewildering that Castle Fate was shaken from wall to wall.

It was after midnight and the four of us were still in the library. Aubrey Dayne had been describing the manners and customs of America and, as I was so excellent a conversateur, we were listening with zest and pleasure.

Suddenly our ears were startled by a cry that startled every one and I saw color leave Clarice's cheeks.

The wild cry seemed to have come from the shrubbery and in an instant Sir Roger, Aubrey Dayne and I were on the porch.

A three-quarters moon was hanging in the sky, now and then veiled in light clouds, and a breeze from the distant Channel stirred the varied foliage of the oaks.

"Come," said I to Dayne. "You are armed, I believe. Let us make an effort to solve the mystery of that shriek."

Springing from the columned porch, we ran down the path toward the grove beyond, followed, but not so swiftly, by Sir Roger.

In a moment we were alone distance from the house trying to pierce the shadows that lay around us, with our weapons in our hands.

But at once there came another cry, different from the one lately heard, and we turned toward the Castle.

"My God! It was Clarice's voice," cried Sir Roger. "The first cry was a warning. Oh, God! My child is in the hands of the thugs!"

It did not need his words to take us in bounds back to the old mansion house.

I reached the porch first, then sprang into the hall and burst open the door.

The lights of the library showed me a scene I shall never forget.

In the center of the room stood Clarice with pallid face and flashing eyes. Her figure drawn to its full height, confronted a little dark man who glared at her with deadly eyes while his long hand gripped a black cord that dangled from it like the cord of the hangman.

In one hand Clarice menacingly held a dagger encrusted with jewels, a trophy of her father's service in India, and she saw only the thug whom she held at bay.

I took in the scene at a glance. The fiend had attempted to strangle her. In another moment I threw myself upon the man, pushed him back and held him against the wall with my fingers sinking as far as I could send them in my madness into his throat.

Further chapters of this exceedingly interesting story will appear in next week's Ledger. All subscribers are to be offered our free cameras and patterns as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Baby's Questions.

Dear Lord, I know you're very great,
And I am little, only eight;
But there are things I'd like to say,
To ask You, Lord, before I pray.
For it's no use to ask mamma,
I've questioned her, and my papa,
But neither one the answers knew,
So I resolved to come to You.
I want to know the reason why
So many children have to die;
And why, with so much bread and meat,
Some little folks have not enough to eat;
And why some lucky little boys
Have all the fun and all the toys,
While others have to work all day
And have no time to roam and play;
And, please, I'd like You to explain
Why people have to have a train;
For pain don't make us good, you see,
It makes a naughty boy of me;
For when I have a real bad ache,
You know what noise and fuss I make.

—Felix Connop.

Puzzling.

"Now, phwat wud ye do in a case loike thot?" he said.

"Loike phwat?"

"Phy," he said, "suppose tittle me is sthrolke, an' me ould woman orders me to ka-ape on wur-rkin'."

"AN IMPENDING TRAGEDY."

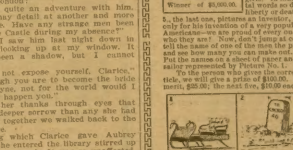
Willie Fly—This insult can only be avenged by blood. Choose your weapons: pins or needles!

$20,000 IN PRIZES!

YOU MAY WIN A FORTUNE.

Across the center of this advertisement are five squares and in each square is a picture which represents the name of a man. In Square No. 1 we give a picture which represents the name of a statue, an admiral, who was present at the battle of Santiago, and who invented the instrument in existence to-day which is used No. 2 represents a soldier, a general, the idol of our boys in blue. In Square No. 3 we have the picture for a lawyer, who was a Senator from Massachusetts, and who died about 10 years ago. Look in your history and see if you can find out. In Square No. 4 we have a picture for a famous orator and whose memory is dear to all Americans. Some people in making a secret letter of it, and these immortal words so dear to the hearts of liberty-loving citizens are known as "Don't give up the ship." Who was this famous orator? No. 5, the last one, pictures an inventor, whose fame ever lives, as his invention will be held sacred if further time. Many other men of note will be used in the contest, but these five are the most famous ones and their names are written on the ball of wax. If you fail to see who they are? Now, don't jump at conclusions, you may be smarter than your friends and be able to tell the name of one of the pictures represented, and can you tell what all represent? Now, try and see how many you can make out. Don't be afraid to spend half a day in figuring the thing out. If you succeed in naming the correct answers you know of, we have deeds prescribed by the sailor represented by Picture No. 1. Do not write more than forty words.

In addition to the correct answers to the five men and the best article, we will give a prize of $100.00. To the person with correct answers and article next best in merit, $50.00; the next five, $100 each, and to the next five, $5.00 each—$600.00 in all.



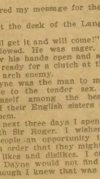
In order to be absolutely fair to all we have decided to select three persons from the contestants themselves, and you yourself may be added to the committee if you desire. Contestants are not obliged to serve unless you wish. We will pay the expenses of the committee from the day they leave home till they return, and they will be paid for their time at the rate of $5.00 per day. Could you ask anything fairer? Do not send any money with your answers.

Duplicate answers, those pictures and articles, will be sealed and locked in our safe and they will only be opened by the committee when the contest closes.

Further than this, you will be sent full particulars of the plan by which $30,000.00 in prizes will be given away.

THE FIRST PRIZE ALONE IS $10,000

Second prize, $5,000, and there are 700 other prizes amounting to $7,000 more, besides 29 special prizes of $1,000 each for those who act quickly.



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Winner of $1,000.

You get send any money. There is only one very easy condition that will take only a few minutes of your time.

Remember that every one of the prizes will be paid, and in order to show you the winners of the 34 prizes in the past we reproduce four portraits of large prizes in the contests the last have been decided. We can show thousands of letters from prize winners, but the statements of those four big winners should satisfy any doubt you may have.

We repeat, send in your answer to the five pictures, do not send any money and write to-day. You may be the one to win $10,000. Address

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29 YEARS OLD.

Published Every Saturday

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All communications shall be addressed to

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When you hear a man say that every man has his price he is looking for a buyer.

The Hon. Joe Cannon is said to be the champion pie eater of the House. What is more to the question, "Is he a good pie cutter?"

It may be, in the long run, a good thing for the country, but the discovery of oil in Ireland will not have a tendency to settle the land question.

The tender solicitude of the British Tories for Ireland just at this juncture serves to recall the pious aspirations of the devil when he was not feeling well.

Whether or not a person should adopt this fad of going without breakfast seems to depend largely on who the person is. It may also depend on the breakfast.

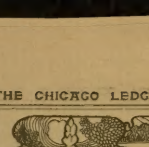
Another reason for taking patriotic pride in the revolution of '76 has already been indicated by President Roosevelt. Look at the large family of daughters it left.

Sioux City Journal: Forty-eight smart Indiana girls have started for North Dakota in response to the call of 500 bachelors who are holding down claims in that State and want wives. This is more sensible than organizing a woman's club.

An amendment to the Indian appropriation bill just agreed to abolishes the tribal government of the Seminole nation. Thenceforth they will have to carry their disputes to the Federal Court, just as all the other good Indians do now.

Incidentally, President Roosevelt reflects on his illustrious predecessors when he inveighs against small families. They have left either no families or small ones. Of the twenty-five men who have held this post in 114 years, ten have had no descendants at all, and of them all the Adams line is the only prolific one. And yet all our presidents were married men except Buchanan.

A learned medical scientist rises to announce that he has a sure cure for St. Vitus' dance, another subunit that he has found a specific cure for leprosy and a third casually remarks that he can cure anything from flu to bubonic plague by stimulating the pituitary gland. In the meantime the citizen who has a cold in the head continues to sneeze and snuffle along in the old way and not a medical scientist can do a thing for him. This seems anomalous.



STRONGER THAN HATE

Or THE FIRE THAT WOULD NOT DIE.

By ERNEST DE LANCEY PIERSON.

(Copyright, 1902, by W. D. Boyce Co.)

Begun in No. 8, Feb. 21. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XII.

THE MAN WITH THE THUMB!

"It would seem as if that man's shadow was to haunt me forever!" exclaimed Chasemore, after he heard Devrins' description of his meeting with the shabby stranger. He rose and walked nervously up and down the room, clasping and unclasping his jewelled fingers.

"After all," stopping before his companion, "you may be mistaken."

"That is possible," remarked Devrins, coolly.

"How was it possible for you to recognize in an apparently old man, ragged and unkempt, with most of his face hidden, Jeoffrey Hale?"

"Well," drawled the other, "he certainly would have passed inspection if there had not been something about his voice that struck me as familiar."

"Voice—voice!" irritably; "as if there is any one who could make such a fine distinction in voices."

"It was not that alone, or the man's manner, but a peculiarity in the man himself. One hand was covered with a ragged glove on the other was none, and I am not quite ready to believe that it is, his appearance at this time would be particularly embarrassing," said Chasemore, exhibiting at his nails. "The wonder is that he should be doing here in the city at all, and in that disguise. Such things only happen in novels, or on the stage."

"He may have gotten the idea from one or the other—it would not be the first time that a man has taken a page from the drama or fiction to serve his purposes. Another thing no one knows only that myself and him here, and that is to see her," and he made a motion toward the ceiling. "To see her, and perhaps verify the matter—to find out if she really led him by the nose that night."

"But how could he know that we were here?" Chasemore was ready with any number of objections.

"Well, you left a caretaker at the New York house; of course he pumped the old woman as to your whereabouts. You have to deal with a clever man, I tell you, and it behooves you to try and hurry up this match as soon as possible or you will lose the young woman for good and all."

"Don't I know it—don't I know it?" testily. "How I wish I had been here when this—this person met you. I would have risked anything to have found out the truth. Ah, I know," bringing his palms together with a slap, "you say you saw him coming along the path through the kitchen garden?"

"Just so."

"Then some of the servants must have exchanged words with the fellow. Perhaps we can get some clue to his identity by what they said. Go down to the kitchen, Devrins, and send the women up. I'll question them myself."

The other shrugged his shoulders and went out into the hall. He returned in a few moments with the information that the face wore such a look of fear as if she were going to summon a policeman.

"Come here, Molly," said Chasemore, sternly.

"Yas, sir—yas, but I ain't done nuthin'," not making any effort to obey the order. "I declar' to goodness, them's the words what I said when they opened the barrel—'deed they was."

"It isn't a question of beer bottles; we will talk of that again. Who was the man in a mask in your kitchen a short time ago?"

"Deed, sir, you think a woman o' my years is a-keepin' company in a kitchen? Why, ther' ain't a cullud gent in this town I'd venture time over," she replied with great vehemence and expressive gestures.

Devrins, who was not surprised with the gravity of the situation as much as his employer, bit his mouth in the palm of his hand.

"I mean that there was a tramp—a beggar, in the kitchen, and not long ago," replied Chasemore, irritably. "Now speak out and don't pretend to be so ignorant, Molly."

"Oh, I didn't call that ole mushrat a man, though he might ha' been once. Jest a ole used-up scarecrow."

"Well, what was he doing there?"

"Doing there? Well," apologetically, "I done think the old feller look so hungry dat I gib him some cold victals, an'——"

"He asked you a lot of questions, I suppose."

"Not a lot—some," and she looked from one to the other of the young men as if trying to find the reason for this cross-examination.

"He wanted to know about the family, I presume?" urged Chasemore.

"He didn't 'pear 'ticlery 'cept about the young lady. 'Spect he had a datter of his own, fur when I picturated that she was likely to git married soon it squashes him all out. I calkilate t'um dat he had a gal what was changin' in de cannibal condition."

Chasemore looked over to Devrins and exchanged significant glances with him.

"Well, that is all, Molly, but be careful and have nothing to do with these ragged wanderers in the future. You can go now."

"Wha—what, is dat all?" surprised that the interview should so soon be over, and still mystified for the reason of her being summoned.

"That is all," exclaimed the master angrily, and she went out of the room mumbling and shaking her turbaned head, unable to understand "sich queer conductions."

After she had gone Chasemore flung himself into a chair and remained for some moments in moody silence.

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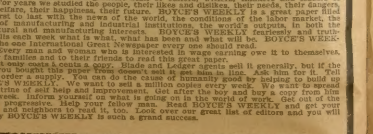

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"You see," said Devvina, "you have fresh proof that I am right. His emotion when hearing that she," and he again perked his thumb toward the ceiling, "was soon to be married, all goes to show that I was not mistaken in my man."

"Well, you need not feel so proud to be the bearer of disagreeable news," replied the other, then, rising to his feet almost with a leap, "I shan't be able to sleep to-night until I have satisfied myself as to the identity of that man," he said decidedly, as he took a turn at the porch and then left the darkening sky without.

"And how do you propose going about it?"

"Why, in a small place like this, such a queer-looking character should be easy to find. It is not a long time ago since he was here, and if he means to maintain the character of an old man he would have to proceed slowly. Come, Devvina," seizing his companion by the arm, "I want you to come along. You can be useful," carried away with the enthusiasm of the idea.

Devvina good-naturedly allowed himself to be inducted into an overcoat, and when Chasemore was ready they set out together.

Already the lights of the town were beginning to glimmer in the gathering dreary winter night was setting in.

Devvina, who had no liking for the undertaking, knew that it was useless for him to attempt to show his companion the utter foolishness of their errand. When Chasemore got an idea firmly fixed in his bonnet head there was little getting it from position only made him firmer.

A few people had seen the old man pass that day, but as he had gone there was now no one to say. In vain did Devvina urge his companion to go to the search, at least for the night, it only seemed to encourage Chasemore to stay.

At the station no such person had been seen taking the train, and that fact seemed to him to be of great importance as showing that the man was still in the place. He would therefore not make the country when all the roads were snowbound, ergo he was still here for the getting.

In their wanderings they had reached a small group of houses of the poorer sort, standing apart as if shunning their aristocratic neighbors—quatters, probably, who would be content to give place to handsome villas.

Having walked before these cottages the young men paused and looked around them aimlessly. Devvina was growing tired with the hopeless search, and was about to make the hopeless search, and was about to make of his condition and suggest a return to the house. But he was still thinking of other things and did not pay the slightest attention to Chasemore's words. The idea that their quest had been fruitless put him in a furious temper at the moment, and he had turned about the whole night, if necessary, to find the man he was seeking.

As they stood in the lane the keen air they heard a strange shuffling sound which the plank walk, and then with a rush, covered doubly audible. Then out of the shadows came lumbering slowly a broad figure, a man walking slowly, feeling his way carefully over the ice with the aid of a stick.

Devvina started to couch this time and drew his companion back into the shadows of an old tree near which they stood.

The electric light on a tall pole on the corner of the street threw a dim light over the scene. The pedestrian seemed to be an old man bowed with years, and walked with difficulty. As he came within range of the light Devvina started and touched his companion's sleeve.

"Take a good look at him," he said in a whisper, "for there is our man—the man with the thumb!"

Chasemore did not show that he heard what was said, but he watched the strange figure shuffle by with interest.

The old man did not noticed them standing there in the shadow, but moved on, feeling his way with his stick, his head bowed on his breast.

"Are you sure that is the man?" asked Chasemore after he was by.

"Sure? Of course I am. Don't you know what the old fellow went to? Do you suppose there could be two such grotesques in a place of this size?"

"Then why does he continue to play the part of a pauper when he has no such necessity for I am sure that he did not know that we were standing here?"

"I can't answer every thing," grumbled Devvina. "But come, if you want to be sure about it we will go and find out where he lives. Depend on it, when he arrives home, if he has one, he will throw off all the strange bent he is wearing and you will find a much younger man in his place."

"Very well," and they set out to follow the strange, bent figure that was still in plain view as it shuffled along in the distance, either unconscious or not caring whether he was being followed or not.

Just as they passed out of the light into the deeper shadows beyond, Devvina nudged his companion's arm.

"I believe the beggar has given us the slip."

Certain it was that the grotesque old man had disappeared.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE CABIN IN THE CLEARING.

The young men walked on in silence. It was a bitter thought to them both that after such a long and tedious search, and when the old man was under their hands he should so suddenly slip into thin air.

"If I were at all superstitious," remarked Devvina, "I should certainly believe that our bad luck was to join his master by way of the underground route."

"Don't be a fool," and Chasemore paused and looked around him while he stamped his feet to keep warm and partly to give vent to his bottled-up wrath. "The old fellow could not get away so quickly unless he has gone into a sewer hole, and there is no such thing about."

"Yes; but a young man might," retorted the other. "Evidently our foxy friend knew that we were behind him and as soon as he was safety in the shadows took to his heels and darted off in a new direction."

"It is no dark here one can see nothing," grumbled Chasemore, who paid no attention to the last remark, if, indeed he heard it.

Above the pavement on which they were standing stretched what seemed to be an impenetrable thicket. On either hand were tracts of land that had not been cleared, outcroppings of the town waiting for a boom in real estate.

Chasemore, after regarding this snowy hedge for a moment clambered up the bank to have a nearer view of it.

"Come here a moment, Devvina," he called in a low voice.

The other, with many a groan, clambered up behind him.

"Well, what now?" he asked, his teeth chattering with the cold.

"I think that I have found the way by which our gentleman disappeared. See here, where these bushes must been pushed aside and are clear of snow. He simply mounted the bank and—well, I don't know what lies beyond."

"Perhaps," said Devvina, in a noncommittal way, "but what reason is there for supposing that this place was visited recently?"

"For that reason," and Chasemore pointed to a faint light that could be distinguished glimmering though the bushes. "Depend on it, that is the road our man took and that light was what he was heading for. Come, I mean to find out what it means, we can get through too much trouble to return now," and he pushed aside the branches and was lost to view, leaving Devvina to follow as he pleased.

They found themselves in a small clearing where some attempt had been made to level the ground, though a number of large stumps loomed up grimly against the snowy surroundings.

The light proceeded from a small building in the background. As they approached they saw that it was a cabin, and that it was made of an attic, with a sloping roof. It was falling to decay, and in the dim light it seemed, in the middle, to have a grotesque appearance seen in-that weird, half light.

Through the small window of a window opening on the ruined porch filtered the faint light of a candle.

It was with feelings of awe not unmixed with fear that the two drew near to this lonely habitation, so desolate and forbidding about the locality that had a depressing effect upon the spirits of both.

After all, there was nothing to be alarmed about. Perhaps a log or two would irritate against their untimely visit, but it was the stillness that oppressed them. The sound from the whine of the wind among the pines that enclosed the little house like a wall in the background totally in.

Certainly this strange being they had followed took no thought of the chance of one from view the interior of his home, for the shutter through which the light came was broken and they could look into what seemed to be the living apartment of the cottage. The room was scantily and strangely well furnished. A comfortable rug covered the floor, a table covered with snowy napery and china looked cosy and inviting in the light of the candle that stood upon it. There was a little gray-haired woman was standing, cooking some meat on a wire broiler.

The watchers paid little attention to her or to other details, for they were interested in the man—the man they had been seeking.

He was standing near a small table on one side of the room and was taking various packages from his pocket and placing them on the table.

"Bundles, eh?" asked Chasemore, in a whisper.

"The same, yellow coat, green shade, and all."

How many packages those big pockets held; it seemed to the impatient young men outside that he would never get through.

In the meantime the little woman who was cooking by the fire placed the meat on the table, and they began their interviews. She addressed some remarks to the man. He still continued to take the things from under his pockets, which seemed to be as replete with them as a conjurer's hat.

Having arranged the things on the table and counted them, this strange individual rose and stood erect—a tall, fine, big and shabby overcoat.

"Now you will have proof that I am right," said Devvina, in a low voice to his companion.

But apparently the man divested himself of his outer garment, but when it was once off Chasemore could see that it was not the figure of an old man that presented himself. The man was busy, too, in keeping his back to the window where the two men were watching, or they saw that he was a man of middle age, with gray.

He removed the green shade from his head and face, and revealed a fine, full, fair view of his features.

It was the face of a man of about forty, clean-shaven and bright-eyed, but it was not the face of Jeoffrey Hale.

As the two men in the darkness stared at the object of this metamorphosis from age to youthfulness, with a sudden gust, a wind blew the shutter open though which they were watching, and happened so suddenly that before they could get out of sight the man within caught a glimpse of a dark face which hung by a nail on the wall.

His wife by the fire was quick as he, and laid a detaining hand on his arm.

All this happened in a few seconds; it was not that Devvina saw as he pulled his companion away from the window.

The moment of the moment they ran off in the wrong direction, and took refuge in a clump of trees that afforded a hiding place. The cottage was still in view, and they had not long to wait before they heard the door being unbarred and saw the shadow of the strange man on the ruined porch.

He still carried the rifle in his hands and the young men watched him with breathless interest.

He stepped out of the shadow of the house and looked around, his wife still at his elbow.

"Did ye know 'em, Jim?" she asked, "for it isn't likely the principals would show up themselves, I'd just like to get a shot at the rascals," and he looked around in an aggressive way, at the same time unconsciously pointing his gun in the direction of the bushes where the two men were hidden.

"What's the use, Jim," urged the woman, "you'd only attract attention, and they probably meant nothing."

"It isn't likely that any one would be prying around this cabin at night time but what they wanted to learn something," he grumbled.

Then he walked up and down and around the circle of bushes that surrounded the clearing, stopping now and then to listen. He paused for some time right in front of the thicket where they crouched. They drew back, wondering if he had discovered them. But their natural alarm was unfounded, for, muttering into the thicket for a moment, he passed on with a grunt, the examination at these points, the woman still following him and remonstrating in a low voice for him to be calm.

"Well, whoever it was I guess they've skipped," said he, at length, as he stood before the porch of the house. "But there is one thing, Mary, I mean to do, and that is get out of this neighborhood as soon as I can find a safe retreat."

With these words he walked into the house, followed by the woman, and there followed a rattle of chains and the grating of a heavy key in the lock.

The cottage now remained in darkness; but a moment after a candle was seen in the window they had quitted a few minutes before.

"Come," said Chasemore, tugging at the sleeve of his companion, "we have made a fine enough of ourselves for one day, I think," and he slipped out of the hiding bushes and, followed by the companion, made his way to the hedge that divided the cottages in the rear from the street.

"Well, what do you think of yourself now?" asked Gilbert, irritably as they reached the plank walk. "I gave you credit for being a man of some perception. I had become confident that you could get at the root of the matter. Here you have—you—you—you—"

Devvina was silent.

"Well, what have you talk. After giving me as much trouble you might have the decency to try and excuse yourself."

"What shall I say?" said the other, as they made their way along. "This is all a mystery to me. Can you suppose I could make a mistake in that grotesque outfit? The long gray beard, the green shade over the eyes and all that?"

"Pooh! I'm not disputing the fact that you may have seen the person, but it was a wild fancy to imagine that it was Hale. That he should be dead is good, for though we have had trouble and a deuce of a search, indeed, the result is very satisfactory. I forgive you, my boy, only the next time don't be so quick to jump at conclusions. It is a comfort to know that Jeffcot's story is true and I am not to be deprived of the pleasure of the fellow popping up at some inopportune moment as a starting evidence."

"You will try and persuade me that it was Hale I saw through the window," with a sneer.

"The clothes and make-up were the same," said Devvina, quite unmoved, "but it was not the same man."

"Well, hardly."

"Hale it was. I am reasonably sure, whom I met today at the back gate in that same identical costume as you saw. Come, now, is there nothing that struck you about the arrangement of the hair which they had made ready for supper?"

"Did anything strike me?"

"Yes."

"Nothing except that it looked very inviting and I should not have objected to an invitation to join the party."

"Well, I could," said Devvina, gravely, "that the table was set for three persons, and one of them was to be the guest."

"Pooh, what nonsense!" retorted Chasemore, "or, rather, to change your reading my boy, and shun the sensational. Enough of such theories; let us go home." But the disquietude they roused by the companion's words remained to worry him. He could only help but wonder, too, who it was that should make the third at that supper in the house of the woods?

This highly interesting story will be continued in next week's issue of the Ledger. We are giving free patterns and free cameras to all subscribers as announced on pages thirteen and fifteen.

Nothing in It.

"Say, Jimmie, I wish you'd contradict de report dat dis young lady an' me is engaged."

Want your moustache or beard a beautiful brown or rich black?

THEN USE

Buckingham's Dye

50cts. of druggists or R.P. Hall&Co., Nashua, N.H.

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MEN WANTED to learn the Barber trade at the Moler Barber College; the only school that pays Commission and furnishes tools while you are learning; position in 60 days. Write for catalogue to C. MOLER, Pres., and Behman Streets, KANSAS CITY, MO.

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Then send your name and address and 10c. (silver) to Prof. Thurnwell, Clairvoyant, Scarborough, Ont., and you will receive by return mail a trial reading of your future life, also a Fortune Telling Pack of Cards, a Dream Book, and a Package of Lucky Seeds. Don't miss this chance. Write to-day.

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A Valuable Gold Finished Watch, Guaranteed Perfect Time Keeper, Fully Worth $5.00, Absolutely FREE. Tells you all about poultry. How to make big money with poultry. Book contains colored plate of fowls in natural colors, and many other valuable poultry secrets. Send 10c. (silver or stamps) to-day. Address JOHN BAUSCHER, JR., Box 92, FREEPORT, ILL.

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Good Bye Infidelity! Here and Now The Only Well Loved 10 Penny Testament Ever Published. Contains Everything Needful for Man, Woman and Child. Sent Postpaid for My Happy Home for Two. Full size sheet music, price 10c. Send to-day. Address Star Text Song Spirit, Send the Price to-day. Only 10 cents. Only 10 cents. Only 10 cents

A Lenten Letter.

For forty days imprisoned in the ark
Hailed Noah solitary on the sea,
Without so much as one rock or a tree
Or star whereby his proper course to mark.
In torrents fell the rain. Did he but hark
He heard the waters laughing in their glee.
How lonely was that voyaging, ah, me!
How desolate, how dreary and how dark!

For forty days I, too, a prisoner
Must taste of loneliness, for this is Lent,
And I in vain look forth for one I love.
On then, white letter and make search for Her.
And, like the messenger that Noah sent,
Be yours to find the olive branch, my Dove.
—Life.

COLLEGE PROFESSORS

Talk of Foods.

The New York papers recently contained a long account of the so-called discovery of a celebrated professor in one of the leading universities. The "discovery" related to a new and successful way of treating wheat and barley to prepare the starchy part by dry baking, so it would be made more digestible and nutritious. Thereupon Prof. Livingstone commenting on the discovery of the other Professor, says, "A discoverer who was a business man first and a scientist afterward found that such foods could be made more digestible when cooked with dry heat instead of by boiling in water, and has already placed on the market the food which he discovered prior to Dr. ——." This refers to Grape-Nuts the most scientifically made food known. Grape-Nuts can be easily digested by babies or anyone with a weak stomach and the food contains the most powerful rebuilding element known, particularly as relates to the rebuilding of the brain and nerve centers. It is a delicious food requiring no cooking but ready for instant service just as it comes from the package. A recipe book free in each package describing many delicious dishes made from Grape-Nuts.

Embarrassed.

"What a beautiful luncheon!" said the guest.

"Yes," answered Mr. Cumrox, "mother and the girls say it is all right."

"But you aren't enjoying it."

"No; I'm a little embarrassed. I've been standing over here trying to figure out which are the edibles and which are the decorations."

A Notre Dame Lady.

I will send free with full instructions, some of this simple preparation for the cure of Leucorrhoea, Ulceration, Displacements, Falling of the Womb, Weary or Painful Periods, Tumors or Growths, Hot Flashes, Desire to Cry, Creeping Feeling up the Spine, Pain in the Back, and all Female Troubles, as all sending address. To sufferers of suffering daughters I will explain a Successful Home Treatment. If you decide to continue it will only cost about 10 cents a week to guarantee a cure. I do not wish to sell you anything. Tell other sufferers of it, that is all I ask. Address Mrs. M. Summers, Box 128, Notre Dame, Ind.

Wouldn't Be Necessary.

"You want to learn to spell better, Bessie," said the mother, looking over her school report.

"Oh, I don't care, mamma."

"But you don't want to grow up and not know how to spell, my child, do you?"

"Yes; I do. I'm going to be a typewriter, mamma."

ONE YEAR FOR 10 CENTS.
A BEAUTIFULLY ILLUSTRATED MAGAZINE FOR 10c. A YEAR.

A new magazine is being started out in Colorado and for the first year will be sent for 10c a year.

The idea is to publish stories of adventure, engravings of all kinds of game, and stories of the chase. It will be called Sportsman's Paradise of the West. The first edition will soon be ready to mail. It is really an honor to become a subscriber to the first issue of our paper and have a chance for our readers. Back of the magazine is an old solid publishing company that will insure success. Send 10c for a whole year (Coin of six 50s. 12 for $1. Or, six years to one person for $1.) Tell all your friends. Postage stamps taken. Send all subscriptions to the Rocky Mountain Magazine, Denver, Colorado.

Point of View.

Mrs. Newrich (in art store)—What! A thousand dollars for that little picture!

Dealer—Yes, ma'am. You see, it's done in oil, and genuine oil paintings are rather expensive.

Mrs. Newrich—Yes, I suppose so; the oil trust monopoly is certainly getting to be something terrible.

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In the Indiana Highlands, on the Monon Route, excel all other mineral springs in America in the treatment of all blood diseases, cutaneous affections, dyspepsia, alcoholism, etc. Send for booklet. Two trains daily from Chicago. City Ticket Office, 232 Clark St., Chicago.

Greek Meeting Greek.

Towne—Mel Gabbie and Perkins at a smoker last night, and introduced them to each other.

Browne—Oh, say, it's a shame to introduce a bore like Gabbie to anybody.

Towne—It's evident you don't know Perkins or you'd see the humor of it.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation allays pain, cures wind colic. 25 cents a bottle.

Her Point of View.

Madge—Don't you think a girl should marry an economical man?

Dolly—I suppose so; but it's just awful being engaged to one.

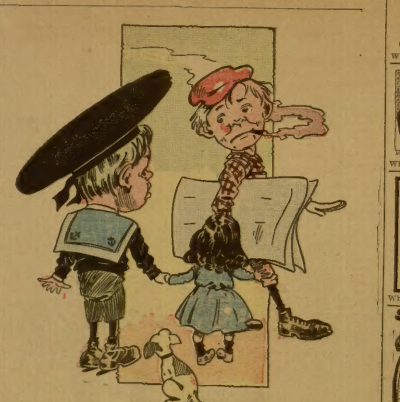
A Dangerous Precedent.

She—Why don't you go out occasionally, dearest, and enjoy yourself, say at the club?

He—But I don't want to get into the habit of having a good time.—Life.

SOME JOKES

She—Is Doctor Chargem Highe a good doctor?
He—Sure. He fills the bill perfectly.



Swell Kid—My papa owns a newspaper.
Newsboy—Dat's nothin'. I buys and sells forty of 'em every day.

Prompt Decision.

"Aw—what is your opinion, Miss Gwace, of the theory that the shape of the head determines the quality of the brain?" Take my head, for instance."

"I should say that there is nothing in it."

Pointed.

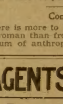
Mrs. Gramercy—My husband is going away for a rest.

Mrs. Park—So you're not going with him?

Comparison.

There is more to be learned from one living woman than from a whole Smithsonian museum of anthropology.

AGENTS WANTED



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Automatic. SAVES $10 more per cow each year. Cheapest and Best. Sent FREE on trial for your use or as bonus for your Gold Watch Premium. Additional CHECK EVERY MONDAY for cash. Write today for your choice. No money; write, send for our Free Proposition.
Harris-Coar Mfg. Co., 617 Wyandotte St., Kansas City, Mo.
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Everywhere to introduce our IDEAL WINDOW WASHER. Write us to-day. Agents say the IDEAL WINDOW WASHER is the greatest convenience. No Buckets, Sponges or Brushes Necessary. Write for our FREE PROPOSITION today.
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This watch with fully guaranteed American movement, stem wind and set, hunting case, handsomely engraved and finished, equal in appearance to a gold filled watch, warranted 10 years. No money required. Write today and we shall send jewelry postpaid. When received, pay our agent only $2.75 and express charges and watch is yours. Write for other premiums as Rogers knife, razor, revolver, tailor made suit, skirt, waists, tool chests, etc. Address
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The "NULITE" VAPOR GAS LAMPS
For Home, Store or Street.
Are Ledger, Simple, Safe, Clean, Cheap. Better Lights. No smoke, no odor, no heat, no dirt. Superior to electricity or gas—cheaper than kerosene oil. No wicks. No trimming like lamps. Absolutely safe. Nothing like them. Send for catalogue. Liberal terms. AGENTS COINING MONEY. Write factory agency proposition at once.
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Postcard sent to our Kansas Directory which goes to 50,000 farmers and stockmen in Kansas, Nebraska, Eastern Colorado, Western Missouri, Oklahoma and Indian Territory, will bring you 100 names of men, and by return mail we will send you 100 letters containing 100 different propositions. Send postcard today. Address Postcard, Ellsworth Directory Co., Kansas City, Mo.
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PITTSBURGH EGG SEPARATOR
It separates the white of the egg from the yolk without breaking the yolk. Necessary in all cooking where the white is used. No kitchen complete without one. Price only 10c. for sample.
Agents Wanted. WATKINS, Box 1866, Pittsburgh, Pa.
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We will ship any bicycle C.O.D. anywhere in the country without a cent deposit, and allow 10 DAYS FREE TRIAL from date of shipment.
New 1903 Models
"Selfline," $8.74
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And lots of other bargains in good bicycles at any price.
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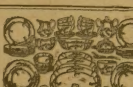

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For selling 10 one-pound cans QUEEN BAKING POWDER, and 10 packages of Bluing, at 10c each, we give FREE a PITCHER and SIX GLASSES, latest cut glass pattern. These goods are high grade, are handsomely colored, and are packed with gold. We also give 60, 82 and 112 Piece Dinner Sets, decorated in all colors, and each piece heavily traced with gold. Premium Baking Machines, and many other valuable premiums for selling our Baking Powder. We give cash commission. Write today for full particulars. We trust everything to honest persons, etc. No money required. You risk absolutely nothing, as we send you the goods and premium you select, pay freight and allow you time to deliver the goods and collect for them before paying us. AMERICAN SUPPLY CO., 900-6 N. 2nd St., Dept. 127 ST. LOUIS, MO.
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AND JOLLITY

Domestic Economy.

Little Vegetarian—Papa, why do you go away again? Why don't you stay home with mother and me?

Papa—But I must go, little daughter, to get bread and butter for you.

L. V.—Oh, papa! if you'll only stay home, I'll eat meat!

EPILEPSY CONQUERED.

Science Triumphant—Good Cheer for the Afflicted—The Remedy Is Free to All.

If you were interested in an electrical problem and wanted expert opinion, you could get more valuable information in five minutes from Thomas A. Edison than you could at a college in a year, simply because Edison has had more experience than a hundred professors.

So it is in medical science. One doctor excels in surgery, another in treatment of diseases of the eye, another in pneumonia, another in fevers, another in epilepsy or fits. It is always the specialist in medicine that effects cures here and there. The specialist doesn't have to guess or experiment. He gets at the cause and goes at the treatment with exact knowledge of how best and quickest to effect a cure.

The merchant that sells everything cannot sell clothing as cheaply as the clothing merchant. The doctor with a general practice is comparatively ignorant on the treatment of fits.

Dr. Fred E. Grant has for over 20 years confined his practice and study to the treatment of fits and today he is ripe in experience, and his cured patients are numbered by the thousands. His practice extends all over the world.

A hundred doctors put together haven't had the experience Dr. Grant has and what is still better, no other doctor offers his remedy free to every sufferer from fits. Every reader of this paper who suffers or has a friend or relative who is afflicted should send to Dr. Fred E. Grant, 230 New Ridge Building, Kansas City, Mo., for a full sized bottle of his treatment, which he so generously offers free.

The remedy will bring sunshine into cloudy lives and happiness into homes of sorrow. Don't miss this wondrous offer, such opportunities seldom occur.

Annoyed.

"Everybody has his little peculiarities," said the broad-minded man. "I don't doubt that you have your own way of looking at some things."

"My dear sir!" answered Mr. Meekton. "I wish you wouldn't talk about my having my own way in that off-handed manner. Henrietta might hear you."

Northern Wisconsin Resources.

Northern Wisconsin offers the finest opportunities for manufacturing and settlement. Fine grazing lands, hardwood timber and mineral soil for the asking; iron ore, clay, marl and kaolin for the manufacturer, are awaiting those who seek the opportunity. Transportation facilities are of the best. Interesting booklets, maps, etc., are yours for the asking. W. H. Killen, Land and Industrial Commissioner; James C. Pond, Gen. Pass. Agent, Wisconsin Central Ry., Milwaukee, Wis.

Not Interesting.

He—You women are forever discussing the bad points of your neighbors. If you were to gossip about their good points it would be more edifying.

She—Perhaps so, but who would listen to us?

A Fine Kidney Remedy.

Mr. A. S. Hitchcock, East Hampton, Conn., (The Clothier) says if any sufferer from Kidney and Bladder Disease will write him he will direct them to the perfect home cure he used. He makes no charge whatever for the favor.

Beyond a Doubt.

"Riches will not buy happiness," remarked the man with the quotation habit.

"Perhaps not," rejoined the chronic doubter, "but I know lots of guys who would be happy if they had money enough to make the experiment."

Catarrh Can Be Cured.

Catarrh is a kindred ailment of consumption, long considered incurable; and yet there is one remedy that will positively cure catarrh in any of its stages. For many years this remedy was used by the late Dr. Stevens, a widely noted authority on all diseases of the throat and lungs. Having tested its wonderful curative powers in thousands of cases, and desiring to relieve human suffering, I will send, free of charge, to all who have catarrh, asthma, bronchitis, throat and lung disease, this recipe, in German, French or English, with full directions for preparing and using. Sent by mail by addressing, with stamp, naming this paper, W. A. Noyes, 847 Powers Block, Rochester, N. Y.

Not His Fault.

Captious Person—How can you reconcile such a thing with your conscience? You contribute to the missionary cause, and yet you sell idols to the heathen!

Philadelphia Manufacturer—They are filled as dolls. I can't help it, can I, if the heathens make idols of them?

Good Exercise.

"You needn't tell me," averred Miss Batchgurl, "that golf isn't good exercise. It makes the young men so strong in the arms that—that you can scarcely breathe."

Reason Enough.

Ella—Why didn't you accept him if you loved him?

Stella—It was only the first time he had proposed.

"Don't you think Tom is close?"

"Well, he did seem awfully close to me on the sofa last night."

A Budding Philosopher.

Gwendolyn (aged six)—Oh! Archie, you're just my ideal; only you're so short!

Archie (aged eight)—Huh. I'm glad I'm short!

Gwendolyn—Glad?

Archie—Yes. If I wasn't glad that I'm short I'd have to be sorry that I'm not tall, and I'd rather be glad than sorry.

Worried.

"I am very much afraid," said Mrs. Cumrox, "that our daughter isn't making the progress in musical culture that she ought to, considering the cost of her lessons."

"Why not?" inquired her husband.

"She prefers a piece that cost only fifty cents to one that I paid a dollar for."

Irascible Master—I don't like your face, Joseph. Where on earth did you ever get such a face, anyhow?

Joseph—It wor a birt'day prisint, sor.

AGENTS WANTED

DIAMOND RING FREE!

Magnificent, Sparkling Alaska Diamond, mounted in the famous Tiffany style and finished in 14k. solid gold, Ladies' or Gents' size. Only sold by agents for years. Send full name and address. Agents wanted. Sell 12 and get 13 free. Sell 25 and get $25 cash, also large premium list. When sold, return the money you receive and your choice of ring will be sent carefully packed in an assorted case, postage paid. Write at once. DIAMOND JEWELRY CO., 141 Park St., ATTLEBORO, MASS.

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$2.00 A DAY representing us. No canvassing. Send stamp. Art College, La Porte, Ind.

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$3 a Day Sure Send us your address and we will show you how to make $3 a day sure. Steady work; every hour you work in the locality where you live we will pay you $3. Don't delay, but write us at once. Write at once. SOCIAL MANUFACTURING CO., Box 823 L, Detroit, Mich.

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FREE GOLD WATCH

This watch has American movement fully warranted for 25 years. To each of the first 1000 sold and reported we will give a Solid Gold Filled Watch warranted 15 years. We will also give a Solid Gold Ring set with a Ruby or Sapphire to any one sending us 10 cents for sample of our handsome Jewelry at 10c each. Send us your name and address and we will send you the Jewelry by return mail. When sold send us the $1.00 and we will positively send you the Watch and Ring. THE MYSTIC CO., Dept. 81, Chicago.

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$6 A DAY FOR YOU and pleasant employment. PROF. LONG'S MAGNETIC COMB Wonderful invention. Sells on sight to every woman. Big profits. Write for terms and beautiful, unbreakable, free sample comb. Takes static electricity from hair, invigorates scalp, cures headaches, and makes hair grow. Exclusive territory given. Exclusive agency for Chicago. Write quick. Free information. PROF. LONG, 20 Ash Street, Parlin, N. J.

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FREE GOLD WATCH

This watch has SOLID GOLD CASE, AMERICAN MOVEMENT, handsomely engraved, stem wind, stem set, guaranteed to keep correct time and to wear 20 years. Weighs 12 dwts. Will be sent FREE to any one who will send us 10 cents for sample of our Jewelry at 10c each. Send us your name and address and we will send you the Jewelry by return mail, when sold, you send us $1.00, and we will send you the Watch and Ring. ACME JEWEL CO., 49 ILL. ST. CHICAGO

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SALESMEN AND AGENTS WANTED.

Harrison Mfg. Co., 15 Harrison Bldg., Cincinnati, O.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

GET BIG MAIL. Would you like to get a lot of letters and packages? If so, mail this advertisement very carefully to 10 names and addresses of persons you know of in business, professional and private life. Then write us for the purpose of sending samples, advertising matter, etc., your own and others' business and addresses we have to get and are quite expensive. We publish an agent's Directory containing the names and addresses carefully arranged in alphabetical order. We send these Directory lists to those we know are anxious for good names and will be willing to mail to us. The cost of sending these names is reliable stamps and taking care of them is considerable yet we only ask you to pay us 10 cents per name. Write your name very plainly so that you will not make a mistake. Be sure to give your street number and town. Do not send us names of those any more addressed to you will result you will not get. Simply mention 10 cts. with your name and address as follows: Send me 10 names you wish your name inserted in our Agent's Directory, and we will insert it in the next Directory issued. Address, AGENT'S DIRECTORY LIST, Indiana, Indiana County, Pa.

When Writing Mention The Chicago Ledger.

THE SIGNET RING;

Or,

Love and Knighthood in the Black Hills.

By ANNIE L. SMITH, Author of "Cuba's Dark Secrets," Etc.

(Copyright, 1902, by W. D. Boyce Co.)

Begun in No. 8, Jan. 31. Subscriptions can begin with that issue, or back copies can be procured from news stands, or our agents, or by mail from office of publication.

CHAPTER XX.
THE TATTOO.

There, in the half twilight brooding in the shadow, in the lonely silence that had succeeded the din of battle, a fearful tragedy had been enacted. The single lance of yellow sunlight streaming in level line through a rent in the buffalo hide, on the western side of the lodge, fell upon a slender form lying prone upon the ground, the masses of disheveled tangled fulling in a veil back from the upturned face from which all trace of color had fled, the dark eyes opened wide, seemed fixed reproachfully upon the lover who bent over her, his heart beats muffled, his lips quivering. The bosom of the chinks gown, the white hand and arm crimson with blood.

Gerald dropped upon his knees with heart and brain on fire.

Great Heaven! who had done the deed? During all the fierce combat he had assured himself that the troopers were between the savages and the woman he loved, and assured that when the band broke one had lingered.

Wildly calling the name of his beloved, he raised her in his arms, pressing kisses upon her lips, her brow and hands.

"Oh, God! can this be true?" he moaned. "It is all plain; some skulking fiend crept away under cover of the smoke while the battle raged hottest and sacrificed my darling's life to appease hatred that thirsted for blood! Oh, my darling, my life, my love, dead! dead! dead!"

A deep step crunched behind him, a sudden shaft of light stole through as the curtain was raised, then gloomed and a hand was laid upon his shoulder, and, looking up in a dazed, stare, he beheld Calamity Jane pitying face of Calamity Jane.

She comprehended the whole at a glance, and divined who had done the deed. She had approached the lodge from the rear and had discovered the white man, Paul Fairfield, huddled against the framework of the structure. The renegade, stricken by the bullet sent by the young Captain, had been mortally wounded, but had spent his last strength in creeping like a serpent to end the life of his helpless captive. In his red sight had he still clasped the fatal dagger.

Bending low, Calamity Jane examined the girl's feature attentively, her quick eye had detected the life current jetting from the wound.

"She ain't dead, Captain; she's badly hurt, but there's enough life left to pull her through if we don't let her bleed to death," exclaimed the brave woman.

A half a dozen troopers were ripping the skins from the wigwam poles without ceremony, and in a moment they had a litter about their Captain.

"Cheer up, Cap'n, she's worth a dozen dead ones yet; expect to die in my boots myself, least wise that's my choice, but want to live long enough to drink your health at your wedding"—a thimbleful of whisky "if we get right here, take my ranch," exclaimed Joe, as he uncovered the stopper of his pint flask. "It's uncommon powerful stuff—hoo! I thought that would bring her out of the faintin' spell."

There was a flutter of the eyelids, a contraction of the brows as the fiery stimulant was forced between her set teeth and trickled down her throat.

"Hear, Calamity, you know a power about surgery, an' are some in roots an' yarbs, an' besides you're a woman with plenty o' pluck; now lest you stop the bleedin' an' bind up the wound, while we'll take counsel about what's to be did next—that is, by your orders, Captain," concluded Joe.

With the true chivalry which prevailed among those stalwart mountain men, these blue-coated troopers all withdrew from the lodge, and Calamity Jane, with all the nerve of a man, and the tenderness of a woman, examined the wound, which to her surprise and satisfaction, she discovered to be superficial. The blow had been dealt by weak hands, and obliquely, the sharp weapon glancing and inflicting a cut from a point directly above the temple where the blow had been aimed, the point of the weapon piercing the right arm below the shoulder. The shock and loss of blood had brought on the faint so nearly resembling death.

"The first time I ever approved o' women wearing korcita," muttered Calamity Jane, "or it hadn't 'a' been for that steel this little girl would 'a' been as dead as a partridge shot through the gizzard."

With a deft hand the woman Indian fighter applied the styptic, adjusted a layer of bandages, and arranged the corsage.

Ione soon regained consciousness, and in short time was able to tell the story of the intended murder.

It was during the height of the conflict and she was watching the combatants as they circled and fought amid the black smoke, her brain and nerves nearly paralyzed, until she saw nothing save the forms of red men and whites battling for life, heard nothing but the clash of sabre and knife and the crack of revolvers.

Suddenly there was a glint of steel before her eyes, a stinging pain shot through her frame, a deadly faintness overpowered her, and through the red mist that swam before her eyes a crouching form half crept, half staggered into the open air. Then all was a blank.

"It was that pestiferous run-a-gate," growled Texas Bill, "you didn't quite finish him, Cap'n, an' so he wound up his with-lotus career in taking revenge; but he's gone where he can keep the company o' the red-skins an' buffalo in a happy medium. I spied him out there, an' I've be'n a investigatin'. I made a discovery. He's got the queerest mark on his shoulder—burnt in with an iron, same's you'd brand cattle—and it's somethin' else—a devil's head and horns, with a pair o' huffs, did in India ink, on his left breast. Maybe we'll get an inkling o' who he is some big day or 'nother. Tell you what, Cap'n, I'm keepin' half a mind to take his scalp to hang up in the 'Belle o' Union' under the Injun top story. Lost somethin', Cap'n?"

Gerald was searching the pocket of his waistcoat which he had found lying within the tepee.

Presently I had something that might give us a clew to the mystery—a ring that came into my possession in a singular manner' and Gerald related the circumstance as already described to the reader.

"The trinket was in my waistcoat pocket, but likely the redskins have taken it."

"Reckon not," said Joe, explaining how it came in his possession.

"It is a handsome ring, and gives one the creeps," she said, as she examined it attentively. "Queer kind of a device, too."

"More'n likely sent it as a token to some red fiend, who dropped it," hazarded Calamity Jane, "like a Injun totem, you know, boys."

Texas Bill gave Calamity has jumped to the right conclusion; women is odd critters and nest can't be beat for guile," remarked California Joe, in a complimentary vein.

"What do you say, Cap'n, is my idee o' takin' that skunk's scalp?"

"No," answered Gerald, decidedly, "we have enough to do to bury our dead; we must not leave our poor fellows lying out unburied to be torn by wolves and birds."

"Oh, he's be'n in cahoots with the reds ever since he's be'n in the bile, fast enough. I'll examine his toggery an' see what I can find out; that is, by your orders, Cap'n."

"As you choose," returned Gerald, with a half smile, and the scout hastened away with a light heart.

It was heavy work excavating the shallow trenches in the rocky soil which was to be the sepulchre of the six brave fellows who lay dead upon the field—two mountain men, three troopers, and Ephraim Butterfield. The latter's dead scout had fallen in the hand-to-hand conflict, just at the moment of victory.

To protect the grave from desecration by any prowling band who might make a camp within the vicinity, Gerald and Ione ton directed that the trench should be dug within the site of the lodge, and together the buffalo covering had been stripped from the tepee, where the carpet of dry sage, pine needles and buffalo robes covered the interior might be replaced in a manner to leave no trace.

"I've found somethin', Cap'n," called California Joe, from the entrance to the lodge, as earth had been placed above the dead, and Gerald and Ione, with hands clasped, shovel which had been hurriedly fashioned to supplement the work performed by the troopers with their sabres and knives, which had been used in digging the trench.

Gerald took the slip of paper in his hand and examined it attentively. Merely a black device, a head, horns with, apparently, the style of communication among the tribes, and beneath the imprint of a hand, with fingers spread. Below the representation of the device upon the ring was the Chinook word signifying power.

Captain Hethrington examined the mark cleverly defined upon the bark.

"I think I have fathomed the mystery," he said, "which is, the signet ring, a sort of totem used by the chief, and the stamp was supplied by the pen sketch after the manner of Indians.

There was short time for speculation, already a squad of troopers, leading their horses, cows and Indian ponies which had been dragging wide trail from point to point until nearly exhausted, had formed a column against the base of the surrounding cliffs, and beneath the shadow of the tall trees at the lower end of the gulch, where their capture was to be made.

Each steed was securely haltered and fore, who declared herself quite strong enough to undertake the journey, was placed in the saddle upon Black Prince, the Captain's own, supported by two troopers, full stood that had been the property of the brave Ephraim Butterfield.

"I say, Cap'n, what's to hender takin' that dead cuss along?" queried Texas Bill, pointing to the corpse, "he's a power o' folderin' among the miners, an' I want to prove what a mighty liar they've be'n holdin' up as an honest man, just because he hide the money. The almighty dollar goes a long way with some folks, an' seein' is believin'; reckon we'll take him along; there's nags enough, an' if there's any difficility, I'll take the odds, that is, by your orders, Cap'n," concluded Bill, with the usual formula used by the independent scouts.

"I have no objection if you are willing to take so much trouble," assented Gerald.

"Jest so," chimed in California Joe, "if we get tired o' the bargain, why we kin drop him like a hot potater," and forthwith the two busied themselves in securing the body to the back of a strong-limbed beast, one of the broncbos who had escaped without a scratch.

Upon examination, Captain Hethrington discovered that five bullets had passed through his coat underclothing, one cutting away the initial letter upon the collar, so near to his neck as to graze the skin.

"Pretty close shave, Captain," put in Lieutenant Strong, laying a powder-begrimed finger upon the torn collar, "it is clear that, like our great Washington, you were not born to be slain by a bullet."

"It was, indeed; a close call," returned Gerald, "but my boy, 'a miss is good as a mile.' Glad we have a moonlight night for our night march."

"So am I," agreed Strong.

Twilight had deepened into night, but the moon, now at the full, sailed serenely in the ocean of blue, thousands of golden stars glittered in the broad expanse, and in the white light it was easy to discern objects at a good distance.

As a matter of precaution California Joe and Texas Bill crossed the narrow ledge and went forward to reconnoiter. Gaining the highest peak they made a careful survey of the white moonlight, soon returning with the report that there were no signal fires, the trail traced by the footprints of Lame Deer's retreating band, which they reported that the Sioux had pushed away to the northwest.

"They've got a long stubbing to try it twice within twenty-four hours," laughed Lieutenant Strong. "I predict we shall reach Deadwood without sighting a feather of a red."

"I'll be safe enough to stand at a venture of we have got a woman an' cattle with us," remarked Bill.

"Safe enough," agreed Texas Bill, turning his cabaco quid from right cheek to left, "you're right, pard, we'll be safe. I gettin' the horned critters along that narrow shelf road 'twixt rocks and down yon'n after they get up there."

"That," quoted Gerald, put in California Joe, "it's a narrow footing, where we go in single file."

"We've got to take the chances; if one gets scared, over he goes into the creek bed a thousand feet below, at present, I'll bet my bottom dollar," put in Calamity Jane.

"Eh! any on 'em wants to try that dodge can have the chance. In our critter a more poorer, that's all, providin' he goes quietly and don't stampede our hosses," returned Texas Bill, sagely.

"I fear most for the lady," remarked Lieutenant Strong, with undisguised saddressing Captain Hethrington.

"That is natural," insisting that she should have Black Prince. A thunder-clap or a shadow from a battery would not disturb the nerves of the beautiful girl, and is as sure-footed as a mule," returned Gerald, with a smile.

A dozen of the soldiers had been wounded, but none severely, the injuries which Calamity Jane had bound up with a practiced hand, those most severely injured with wet compresses.

At the bugle call, "Boots and saddles," the troopers mounted, the "forward" rang out, and, crossing the bridge in single file, the command, with Gerald trail, the two scouts with Calamity Jane in the lead, and directly behind her Captain Fairfield Hethrington with Ione by his side at the head of the column.

It was a tolisome ride, the path winding up, turning to the right and left to avoid too steep an ascent, skirting the summit of the ridge, along a level strip for a short distance, then plunging abruptly downward into a deep vale. The animals had often to slide down, bracing, placing two feet securely before essaying a second step.

Within an hour after midnight the cavalcade reached the point where the trail zig-zagged up skirting the declivity, and by the light of the moon, joined the path upon the shelf where but one horseman could pass. Here, Calamity, acquainted with the rough mountain passes, sidled up the steep, riding close to the rocky wall, grasping horn, and at length reaching the apex of the hill, from which the trail again descended, the path, their way downward, with hoofs carefully raised, and the sharp edges proofed in the same way until they struck the shallow ravine and began ugain to ascend.

"Here's the tug o' war," called California Joe, "there's the hangin' rock ahead. I'd advise the lady to keep a sharp lookout on her critter's ears, an' if so be she hears anything under it to sing out pronto; don't look 'round, she might git worse 'n Lot's wife by the operation; if anything's 'stead o' suit better have her falter Calamity, an' you, Cap'n, foller next, your beast is surefooted."

"None better," returned Gerald, to whom the last remark was addressed.

"I took the liberty, Cap'n, on account that the critter might git scary, you know, and then there's nothin' for't but to let 'em go over," whispered Joe.

Calamity Jane turned to the young girl.

"Keep a steady rein and on no account let your beast see that you are fearful, and you'll go safe enough, and, above all, don't look behind you, whatever happens or you might stampede the whole train," she exclaimed, for the keen eye had detected the lossing horns among the cattle across the curve in the rear which brought the animals in view. "Whatever you do, don't look behind."

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that no small matter, or even a grave danger would startle me sufficiently to make me cry out," returned Jone.

"Do not fear, darling," whispered Gerald, in a tone that was almost a caress, "Black Prince will obey my lightest word, and I shall be within arm's length of you and will mark every movement. Remember my good steed bears a burden dearer than life to me."

"With you to guard I have no fear," returned Jone, in a steady voice, "my courage will not fail."

At a signal from California Joe the party moved forward on the most dangerous portion of the march, along the narrow path winding up the cliff and beneath the ponderous ledge where hundreds of tons weight overhung the trail.

CHAPTER XXI.

A DANGEROU'S PASS.

It was a fearful passage as foot by foot the party crept up the ascent in single file, California Joe in the lead, Texas Bill following, and next in order Calamity Jane, Jone, Captain Hethrington, Lieutenant Strong, and in line the squad of troopers, save half a dozen arm's length in the rear guard of the horses and cattle, slowly picking their way. Upon the left, and so near that the riders could touch with outstretched arm, towered the perpendicular wall of rock a hundred feet above their heads, on the right, with scarcely three feet to spare, was the yawning abyss of another hundred feet shelving over the narrow gorge forming the bed of the stream.

A false step, a swerve and horse and rider must be hurled to instant death.

Under the brilliant moonlight the faces of the daring soldiers, scouts and mountain men looked set and stern, they were facing death in its most horrible aspect, and they realized the danger.

Presently the way grew less plain, the shadow of the mighty cliff overhanging their heads like a Titan roof projected far beyond the narrow foothold, hovering black as the wing of Azrael, far down the gorge, the creek, now swollen to a torrent, tore with resistless force between the rocky jaws shutting it in, roaring, dashing against the pointed rocks in its course white with foam.

Five minutes of suspense, minutes that seemed like hours, while even the heartbeats seemed stilled, moving like a procession of spectral figures, their forms lighted only by the phosphorescent glow from the moonlit spray below, and through which the moon's rays were reflected in ghostly shadows.

It was a fearful ordeal until out from the blackness the head of the column emerged, still safe, and moved on, but now with the clear, silvery light to guide them, and Captain Hethrington drew a long breath of relief. The strain upon his nerves had been intense. "Who have fared the worst, or been wounded as she was? Not a whisper had escaped her lips, but as the path veered slightly to the left he caught a glimpse of her white face, the firmly compressed lips and widely opened eyes, as she sat steadfastly straight before her.

"Are the danger past? No! Suddenly from the rear came a hoarse bellow, a loud snort, and instinctively he turned his head.

The animals were still beneath the dark shadow of rock, their drivers hidden from view.

Scarcely a man but followed their leader's example, turned in the saddle over a shoulder, and all saw the bulky form of a clumsy steer at its extreme rear, and just at that instant a shapeless bulk in the gloom of the overhanging rock, shooting like a meteor through space, in the wild excitement, hidden for a point of time beneath the swollen flood, and then, as if driven for the prey, the beast struggling feebly in the swirling torrent and then helplessly forced, dashed against the rocky base of the cliff, and disappearing beyond a spur on the opposite side.

The brave girl heard the sound and her face grew a shade brightened instead, but her hand tightened on the rein, and, obedient to her impulse, she resolutely refrained from turning her head.

"Thank God, she has been spared that fearful sight," breathed Gerald, as he tightened his bridle rein and rode forward.

The danger was past, patently the path way widened, and in five minutes the entire command was encamped in the wooded spreading at the foot of the pass.

The morning sun was flooding the streets of Wetmore with rather faint light when the cavalcade drew rein in the open square adjoining the County Court House.

A crowd gathered so quickly that one might say how such a miracle could gain a knowledge of the arrival, but in a mining community news flies with lightning rapidity.

It's excitement was intense, the strongest bonded men were gathered in their way to the inner ring, eagerly questioning the troopers, who mingled in the general uproar, and a very babel reigned. Among those inside the circle stood Ransom Falconer, erect, dissected, quite as unmoved as if a stranger instead of his only child had been subjected to a terrible captivity.

Jone stretched out her hands imploringly as she caught sight of her father.

"Mother, my dear mother, is she well? How she must have suffered! Did she guess? Tell me quickly!" she cried, hysterically.

Hysterical, as usual; of course, I expected nothing less, she took to her bed, where she has remained," he replied, in a matter-of-fact tone, which set Gerald's blood tingling in his veins.

"What a cold-blooded wretch," he thought, "nothing that does not affect him personally can stir that calculating, callous nature. He is the most unnatural father it was ever my fortune to meet."

"I must go to her at once."let us hasten home with all speed; every moment must seem an age to her, darling mother, but you will come with us, Gerald" turning to her lover.

Ransom Falconer scowled darkly, but surrounded by those determined men, he dared make no demonstration of the ill will with which he regarded the young Captain or of the fierce anger that stirred his evil nature to its depths.

"Who have you there, Sargeant?" he suddenly demanded, turning to Sergeant Fairfax, and pointing to the body, which had been strapped to the back of a thoroughbred animal, and covered with a blanket. "That horse looks like one owned by a ranchman in the valley beyond Cook; one of your troopers, eh?"

"No," interrupted California Joe, as he lifted his eagle eye on the face of the questioner, "it's a mean skunk—a white man—a desperado that we've brung along jest to give him a fore he powdied out on the tramp to the happy hunting grounds with his friends—a Lone Dove's gang o' mail robbers. Ef you're curious, maybe you'll examine him as one o' your friends," concluded the scout, with a menacing glance, and, rapidly unbuckling the straps that held the body, he drew back the blanket, disclosing the features.

"Paul Fernald! My God!" gasped Falconer, his face whitening; "you say a dead—made—made—confession? I don't understand. What did he confess?"

"Everything a'most," returned Joe, mendaciously, "such as what a scurvy scamp he was! Some o' his pals was present, and I've convin'in' with the Injuns—et what he's leaks out o' his mouth, and how he's hands a hangin' on some o' the limbs outside the settlement, and I reckon the rest o' the world tell you all about it later. Hold on, Bill, don't broke off Joe, with a start. "I'd a' swore he was a descendent o' rin', but sich trash is hard to kill, live as long as a white cannot, and I reckon we'll take hold here, Bill, he's got kick enough in him to start a mule—easy there!"

Fernald's limbs were free, and with a strength totally unexpected he sprang to a sitting position, grasped the bridle-rein, and with a cry dug his heels into the animal's sides. The fiery steed reared, struck out with its fore-hoofs, and then, as the rider leaped roughshod over those in front had started on a mad career, burst by the, and, with a powerful wrench, wheeled the animal on his tracks.

Gerald leaped from his saddle and grasped an arm of the desperado with a grip of staggering force, but too late.

Fairly foaming with rage, the prisoner was dragged down, and bound to the ground, where he lay helpless.

"Look you, Joe," said Jone, in sternatorian tones, "we've got one o' the meanest reptiles that crosses the face o' the earth, right here, and you know him well, you calls himself Paul Fernald, though Lord knows he's got a dozen names by this time, he's got a baker's dozen more. Got blood money enough to make the whole bootle o' tough characters in this town—don't it, git it?"

He paused for his question to take proper effect.

"I'll tell you how an' jest where we found him. Sneakin' 'round with Lame Deer's band, that's where we found him, sneak and sped up as you see, like a red Injun. Tell you what it is, Jone, he's one o' the rats that eat the cheese right along—he took the money, the redskins took the scalps an' the ponies, and he got off with the gal—Miss Jone. Ask her if 'taint so; where did he take her to? Ask her if 'taint to his camp, that's where. They'd got Cap'n Hethrington and Strong nicely trussed to roast; we got there jest in time—had a scrimmage, the tallest kind o' one, left Lieut. Butterfield and five o' Troop B, buried where they fell; took our wounded with all speed, and there's never a shoulder dead, an' the rest got away. This rascal we'll talk about that later. See how 'tis? We'll talk about that later. See how 'tis? There couldn't be an ounce o' gold sent out, nor a dollar o' blood money, without him in to pay off the army but this skunk found it out and set the whole town wild. Now, boys, what shall we do with him?"

"Shoot him!"

"Hang him!"

The responses came quick and fierce, above the yells of execration rising on all sides.

The renegade raised his head and struggled to a sitting position, with a grimace of wounded tiger.

"You've got foil upon Ransom Falconer and a demoniac smile distorted his pallid features.

"Ha, ha, ha!" he laughed, wildly, pointing toward the man who cowered back, with his face whitening as much as himself from that fiery glance. "I'll die in good company, there'll be two of us, and I swear I will not die alone: he shall not live to enjoy the wealth for which I have sold my soul. Ha, ha, ha! Curse him, curse, seine him! Don't you see his face? Curse him, curse him! Don't you see his face? He fell back, his face contorted in an agony of pain, while his hands, at his breast where the bullet lay imbedded, his whole frame trembling like an aspen.

"Curse him, curse him, my darling," whispered Gerald, in a caressing voice, as he bent over the form of Jone, "I shall go with you and your father and leave you under the protection of your mother. Come."

But Ransom Falconer had vanished.

CHAPTER XXII.

GOD'S JUSTICE.

No one had noticed the rabbed-faced man that made his way swiftly through the crowd, mounted his horse and rode away at first at a walk, then at a trot, and soon breaking into a swift gallop, increasing to a breakneck lower, the maddened populace.

"Lost! all is lost!" he muttered, and the wind fanning his fevered brow in his mad flight, seemed to whisper back in mockery: lost!

Paul Fernald, his confederate in crimes, should be secure—nothing would induce him to betray him; even now the bloodhounds of the law, or worse, of Judge Lynch, might be on his track, and he must fly—where? Where his prince known, the maddened populace would hang him with as little ceremony as they would shoot a mad dog. His hands had not been imbrued in blood, but he was as truly a murderer as if the victims of savage barbarity had been slain by his own hands.

With wealth at their command, the proceeds of a bank robbery in the city of St. Louis he had found his way to the Black Hills, his confederate in the crime, Paul Fernald, joining him. To Fernald the plains had long been a stamping ground, and he had spent years of easy in gold and threats of exposure, he had induced Falconer to join him in his career of robbery, while the vagus were the scapegoat. Neither widow nor daughter suspected his secret, or guessed that when the suddenly returned, unannounced, his determination to remove them to the mining community during the absence of two years, the husband and father had come into his wealth by a systematic series of robberies.

Who didn't he do? growled Falconer, "you shall not, would up with a savage oath, "an opportunity was served to have put a bullet through his head and stopped his foul tongue. The fool's up, there is nothing left, I to collect the jewels and gold I have secured in the vaults, and fly. Curse pulling, pale faced wife and wretched child of a daughter, they remain and starve for aught I care."

The rapid flight of hoofs along the road he had just traversed served his retention, and with a savage oath at the great-eyed speed, he dashed recklessly forward.

The blooded animal he bestrode, lashed into fury by the cruel spur of the sharp Mexican spurs which his rider almost imbedded in the animal's flank again into his quivering sides, reared, swerved to the right, and then, with a bound that shattered and pointed rocks bristling ruggedly before him, the rising ridge of metal against flint as the steel-shod hoof struck, a crash of twigs and low-hanging branches, a heavy fall, and the rider struck a sharp projecting limb. Ransom Falconer swayed and reeled backward, while with the animal, bearing an empty saddle upon his back, plunged on in mad flight.

And so they found him, Captain Hethrington and the daughter of the dead man, lying doubled up and the thick tangle of brush, briar and vine, just as he had fallen. It does seem that the Nemesis, the sharp spike of rock had pierced, inflicting instant death. From his waistcoat pocket a blood-stained paper protruded, and, scarcely knowing why, Jone took it in her trembling fingers—a letter addressed in a thin, spidery hand:

"Ransom Falconer, Deadwood City, Dakota.

"The seal is broken; would it not be well to read the letter? It may contain something that curious eyes should not look upon."

"I know the hand—it is Paul Fernald's," she whispered, "I cannot.

With a hand that trembled perceptibly, Captain Hethrington complied—was dated on the evening of the abduction.

"My Dear Sir: For reasons best known to yourself you have seen fit to neglect to fall in compelling your daughter to accept me as her husband, though you, and, in your case, a dangerous lenity—I say say, nudnese, on your part. I am, therefore, under the necessity of calling to the aid of our faithful redskins. When the good, brave gentleman, and loving bride of the valiant Captain, she will be speeding across the plains to Texas, and thus will I partially wipe out the insult received at his hands. For your own sake you will keep the abduction secret sufficiently long to allow me a night's start, as there is a large sum of money in it. If you are unable to stop your wife's tongue, why, you will be compelled to know. Where possible, put the posse off the scent. I shall keep Mrs. Falconer and the

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He edged nearer Tom Elliott.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

IN THE HAREM.

A fanfare of trumpets announced their entrance into the throne room, a spacious apartment, at the farther end of which Tom saw the despotic ruler seated upon his throne and attended by a crowd of nobles, while lining each side of the room was a double rank of soldiers.

Chinese Dave and the attendants bowed to the Ameer, while the former whispered to Tom to do likewise.

"Not on your life," answered Tom, standing by his wheel resolutely.

The Ameer lifted his hand and the kneeling men arose.

Then admonished Chinese Dave, wherein Tom mounted the wheel and gracefully circled the hall. He made no pretense at being a trick rider, but even so, he performed several very common feats for the ordinary rider, and to the Orientals they were marvelous.

Finally Tom rode back to the entrance place and dismounted. His wheel was taken by an attendant, and he was then led forward to meet the gladiator, a stalwart barbarian, whose muscles stood out like bands of iron. He was armed with a short sword, while his body was protected by a shield worn on his left arm.

A sword and shield were tendered to Tom by an attendant, but the cyclist was not much elated by their possession.

"I'd rather fight him with bare fists," said Tom.

"But you must use those," said Chinese Dave.

"I don't know how to handle them," continued Tom. "Are there any rules to the game?"

"Only one—get him or he'll get you," laughed the villain, "and I guess he'll get you."

"Anything goes, then?"

"Yes."

Tom then deliberately cast the shield upon the floor, where it spun like a top, while he turned toward his adversary with only the short sword to defend himself.

The latter, somewhat dismayed, pointed to the shield, but Tom shook his head and advanced.

Thereupon the Ameer clapped his hands as a signal and the contestants crossed swords.

For some minutes they feinted and parried, neither one gaining an advantage, but Tom's feinting was all to one purpose. Each time the Arabian's shield was brought farther from the point it most protected. At last, after a desperate lunge, the shield was ruined high; 'twas only for an instant, but Tom's observant eye was upon it, and in a twinkling he landed a short-arm jab with his left squarely upon the Afghan's solar-plexus. With a groan he dropped unconscious upon the floor, while Tom held aloft his sword to show that it was a bloodless victory.

The defeat of the giant, for he was thought dead, created great commotion, and amid it two attendants ran forward, sunk their hooks into his quivering flesh, and dragged him from the room.

Tom was now led forward to the Ameer's throne, and the ruler presented him with a ring from his finger, saying at the same time a number of things, which were unintelligible to Tom.

"You are to have the pleasure and a distinction never before shown any man, of witnessing the marriage ceremony," said Chinese Dave to Tom.

"Tell his nibs that I don't care for the honor," said Tom.

"But you will have to."

"Well, all right, then, I suppose that settles it.

Tom now discovered that he was very much at liberty in certain portions of the palace and could wander around as he pleased, there being a strong guard at every point beyond which he was not permitted to go.

It was not long until he found Mr. Navarre and Pug. They were in the apartment of a high official who was endeavoring, in very poor English, to explain to Mr Navarre that the Ameer wished a competent accountant to scrutinize the accounts of the tax-gatherers, and also keep an account of moneys paid out.

Tom sank down upon a divan and listened while Pug aimlessly wandered about the room, "cussing" the luck in true newsboy fashion.

"I am to witness the infamous ceremony," said Tom, at last breaking into the conversation.

"Oh, God! Must this happen?" asked Mr. Navarre

"I am afraid so," answered Tom. "Where does it occur?" he asked of the Afghan official.

"In the harem."

"Do you suppose I really am to be present?"

"If His Highness said so."

"How will I get there?"

"I will take you. This door leads there," pointing to a small aperture in the room.

"But it is locked," said Tom, after trying to open it.

"I have a key," said the official, displaying several keys hanging at his girdle.

"Well, you won't use them soon," said Tom, grasping him by the throat.

He choked the man into insensibility, then bound and gagged him, depositing the still breathing form behind the divan, and covering it over with curtains.

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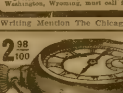

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Fug danced a break-down in gleeful anticipation of freedom.

Tom unlocked the door indicated as leading to the harem, and discovered a long, dimly-lighted passage.

"I'm going after Ella," he said. "You wait here for me."

In a few moments he found himself at another door, and on unlocking and opening it, he peered into a great room luxuriously furnished, and sweet with the perfumes of Orientalism.

Tom stood in wonder and amazement.

Reclining on a divan he beheld a beautiful woman, clad in gauzy garments which revealed rather than concealed her magnificent form. Upon seeing him, she started forward and quickly came to his side.

"Ah," she said, "it ees ze Americaine who kill ze great wrestler. Ah, I lofe you," and she threw both her arms about his neck.

"Say, for God's sake!" cried Tom. "This won't do. Who are you?"

"I am ze Ameer's las' wife," she said. "I was a French ballet girl, an' he lofe me, so I became his wife."

"Well, say break away a minute," cried Tom.

"But I lofe you. You are ze great strong man," she sighed.

"That's all right, but the devil would be to pay if he got caught here with you."

"Zen we no get caught. See, we slip in ze bathroom, an' no one come for us."

"No, no; I came here to release Ella Navarre, whom the Ameer has to marry this evening. For God's sake, help me."

"You lofe her?"

"No; she is the daughter of my friend. We were captured in the mountains while on a tour, and I fear that we are doomed to slavery, and she to become a member of the harem. Please help me, or I shall must be quick, because the Ameer has commanded the ceremony to occur instantly."

"You love me I will help you."

"Kiss you? Why, yes, I'll kiss you a dozen times if you will only help me."

"Zen a dozen—come, M'sieur!"

And the lissom French girl a dozen times.

"Now, hurry," he said.

"You slip in an' you I bring her."

Five minutes later the door opened and the French girl appeared, leading Ella Navarre, who was trembling with fear and excitement.

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CHAPTER XVIII.

"GO BRING THEM BACK!"

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Later on they discovered the official whom Tom had hidden behind the divan, and then the whole truth came out.

All the inmates of the harem were closely questioned, but they all disclaimed any guilty knowledge. However, it was quite plain to the Ameer that the sacredness of his harem had been desecrated by the presence of a Christian man, so he ordered several attendants put to death "on general principles."

Chinese Dave was ordered to recapture the fugitives and he attempted to do so, but failing, he returned to the palace and made his report. The Ameer, however, was not satisfied. He had seen pretty Ella Navarre, and he wanted her for his wife; he also admired the bravery and strength of Tom Elliott.

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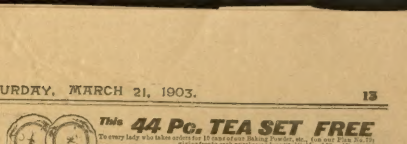
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LUCKY "7" PUZZLE

$1000 TO OUR LUCKY READERS FREE!

In the square below are a lot of figure 7's. They are all jumbled up and mixed together so that they are hard to count. The idea of the puzzle is to count the number of figures in the square. Every reader of this paper who sends us a sheaves at six a prize. We have also arranged with us the exact number, and we not only give prizes to the person who comes nearest but also to those who come exactly the same distance from the right number. For instance, if the person who comes nearest to the correct number of figures in the square gets $200, the person who comes the nearest gets $100, the next $50, the next $25, and the next 100 persons each get $1.00, and the next 200 persons each get $0.50. In case of a tie for any of the prizes, the answers received after that time will be counted.

In case the number of persons who send in the correct answer is more than the prize is equally divided. There is no guess work in this puzzle. It is simply a test of your ability to count figures correctly. Every reader of this paper has an equal chance to win one of the prizes. Don't delay, but count the figures carefully, and send in your answer at once. This contest will close on Wednesday evening, March 31st, at 9 p. m., and answers received after that time will be counted.

The prizes are handed better contest closed on December 31st, and the prizes were all awarded exactly as advertised and 1126 persons were very glad they answered the advertisement. We have at space to print the names of the 1126 prize winners.

The publishers of WOMAN'S WORLD have a paid capital of $1,500,000. We own our own paper mill, and print WOMAN'S WORLD on our own presses. We have the largest circulation of any 25c. monthly magazine in the world, with one of the largest subscription lists of any publication.

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The soldiers did not return until broad daylight, and then they searched the sides of the road diligently.

Tom found a peasant's house and managed to secure some food for the party, but even this was risky, for fear being that the peasant might give word of their presence.

When night came they started on briskly, and ere dawn broke again Mr. Navarre thought that they had covered fully thirty miles. "It's a good thing we are used to walking," he said.

The morning of the fourth day they reached Peshawa and were rejoiced to once more find themselves in touch with civilization.

"Well, this ends the bicycle tour, Tom," said Mr. Navarre.

"Not on your life. I have three weeks before two months left, and I'm going to win."

"How?"

"No 'buts.' Get me some money. My outfit even to revolver and ammunition is still in the bicycle case. I will cut right down this valley to where the Ameer river comes out, then ride it to the Aral Sea, from that to the Russian boundary is only a few hundred miles, and once I get into Europe I will cut a streak through the atmosphere toward Brest, France, where I hope to meet you."

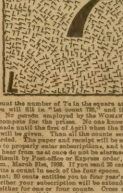
"It's hardly worth while. You cannot hope to finish on time."

"But I do."

"The distance is great and the roads certainly fearful."

"Nevertheless, now that I am all alone I can make time."

HOW MANY FIGURES IN THIS SQUARE?



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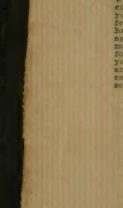

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desperate villain from Paris. He arrived just in time to board the steamer, which he did, at the same time cursing the luck which had lost him the chance of ending Tom Elliott's life ere he landed in Brest.

"But I'll make a sure job of it now," he said. "They don't know I'm on their track and so I'll take them unawares."

He stood about the deck watching the passengers as they walked to and fro, and late in the evening his vigilance was rewarded by seeing Tom Elliott and Ella Navarre come up the companionway and start about the deck for a stroll.

Stealthily he followed them.

The chilly evening had driven most of the passengers below, so the young couple met few as they walked along.

They paused by the rail and leaned over watching the lights of the steamer reflected in the heaving billows.

Chinese Dave stealthily crept toward them. He glanced about to see if he was observed.

No, they were alone; the deck was deserted.

Drawing a long, gleaming knife, he edged nearer to Tom Elliott. He stopped, steadied himself, and then, quick as thought, the knife aimed straight for the cyclist's heart.

CHAPTER XIX.

DUG'S WISH GRATIFIED.

Little Pug, the newsboy, apprehensive that Chinese Dave would somehow contrive to encompass his designs, was the only one of the party who was on the alert.

The villain had not been aboard the steamer half an hour until the venturesome boy was aware of his presence, and he immediately decided to keep a close watch on the man until he had a chance to inform the remainder of the party.

It was well that he had done this, for when Chinese Dave stealthily slipped up to Tom Elliott and Ella Navarre the newsboy was just behind him lurking in the shadows.

As the villain drew his long, gleaming blade to plunge it into the unsuspecting victim, Pug hurriedly advanced.

He was too late to warn Tom and Ella. By crying out, and he had no weapon with which to strike down the would-be assassin.

In this dire extremity an inspiration came to him, and, quick as thought, he snatched a hat pin from the Tom o' Shanter cap which Ella wore. The next instant, just as Chinese Dave lunged forward, the boy plunged the long, steel pin between the villain's ribs into his heart.

The man staggered, his knife dropped, and he fell upon the astonished couple before. For a moment he hung there, long enough for Tom and Ella to recognize his hated features, and then, with a low moan, he was overbalanced his body and it fell into the sea.

"My God!" cried Tom; "it was Chinese Dave! And he was driving at me with the murderous-looking knife. "he was in the act of striking when you—"

"I wonder what saved us?" asked Ella, her face blanched with terror at the narrow escape.

"The Lord only knows," answered Tom. "It's queer, but I'll be dog'd if I don't know now," thought Pug, as he crept away. "I had t' do it, but I'll be dog'd if I got de chance. I'll tell 'em later."

"Let us go below," said Tom. "I am quite unnerved."

It was enough to terrorize any one," answered Ella, and the two walked up the staterooms to tell Mr. Navarre of their narrow escape.

The steamer arrived in New York on the morning of the 15th. Tom had engaged with the time remaining in which to complete the journey if he was only left alone. But, as he feared, the excitement had reached that he was on the vessel, and they were at the pier to greet him.

An officious detective, in company with Jack Hardy, pressed through the gang plank to be sure that Tom had no chance to escape.

"There he is! There he is!" cried Jack Hardy, desperation and fear agitating him when he saw that Tom was approaching for the exit from the steamer. "Get him!" he cried to the detective.

The detective lurched forward in the crowd, his burly form scattering people right and left. He was followed up by a small pank of crowding and pushing humanity and Jack Hardy, in his nervous joy at wicked cause, was punished.

He was standing close to the edge of the plank, just where its railing touched the side of the steamer. Intent on watching Tom Elliott and Ella, he did not see pushing of the crowd until he was knocked from his feet and fell with a heavy splash into the dock to which it was lashed.

With a cry of terror he clutched at the piling which formed the foundation of the dock. A deck hand, observing the accident, quickly threw him a rope, which he seized late. Ere the unfortunate young man could be recovered the steamer had passed from the steamer close to the dock, and Jack Hardy's wickedness was at an end forever.

Later the vessel was eased away and his crushed body was recovered to be sent to his sorrowing parents in Chicago.

But the detective paid no attention to this incident. He was bent on arrest Tom Elliott, and he did so.

"Look here," said Tom, "I'm going straight to Chicago, but I want to finish up my business first."

"Sorry," said the officer, "but I guess you will have to go by train."

"I am not going by train," said Tom.

"The court will have to settle that."

"I'm not afraid of the court," said Tom, "I am anxious to meet my accusers, if any are left after the death of poor Jack Hardy."

"There is plenty of evidence."

"Well, let me finish my ride and I will surrender to you."

"My instructions are to bring you at once."

"Aren't those George Hardy's instructions?" asked Mr. Navarre.

"What has he to do with it?" asked the detective, coloring slightly.

"How much does he pay you for insisting upon delaying us?"

"Sir—"

"Come; how much?"

"You don't suppose I would accept a bribe?"

"Yes; I do. Now, no bandying terms; how much does he pay you?"

"Five hundred dollars."

"Well, here is a thousand. Now, we will follow Tom on automobiles. How's that?"

"Good," answered the detective, pocketing the money.

This arrangement cost half a day's time, and it was late in the afternoon before the start could be made.

Tom followed the pace set by the auto, and at times it was pretty fast, for Mr. Navarre, who was operating it, was bent on determined to win the wager.

"This is great," Pug confided to Ella, as they spun along. "I allus wanted a ride in one of dese 'chu-chu' waggins. Didn't t'ink I ever would, though.

"We'll ride in one every day when we get home," she answered.

When George Hardy learned through the newspapers that Tom Elliott was coming through to Chicago by wheel he sent another officer out to take him on another warrant, but as Tom was already in custody the officer could not molest him.

It was an automobile crowd which rode up Michigan avenue, in Chicago, early in the morning of June 1, and the Athletic Club members had remained up all night to greet them. It was just three o'clock in the morning when Tom dismounted from his wheel on the very spot from which he had started a year previous.

Banker Fell immediately declared the great race won by a margin of five hours, and handed the two $5,000 checks to Mr. Navarre.

"Where is Mr. Hardy?" he asked.

"He was here a few moments ago," said one. "Perhaps he is in the club house."

A search was made and he was lodged found—dead. A knife had silently ended the life of the evil man. A note on the table beside him told many things. It read:

"It's all up with me. I am thousands of dollars in debt and an embezzler of funds from my firm. I can never repay the money, so I take this method of ending my life. I used the foulest means to keep Navarre from winning this wager, but it seems they all failed. Tom Elliott is the son of Henry Navarre, who was stolen at my orders from his parents when an infant by the man known as John Jackson. I repeated the boy dead, but a short time before the wager ended I learned differently. Young Elliott—or Navarre—did not kill old Jackson. I don't know who did, but my lawyer, Jack Hardy, had a hand in it. I hope this confession will appease the wrath of those whom I have wronged, and that they will pray for my forgiveness. I have suffered enough in this world.

"George Hardy."

"My own boy!" cried Mr. Navarre; "thank God, you are found. Only your mother was here to participate in the joy of this moment."

"And Tom is my brother!" cried Ella, flinging her arms about him and showering him kissing him. "I knew I'd like you from the first, and now we'll mainly brother. I'm awfully proud of you."

"My good fortune overwhelms me," answered Tom, "I can't take time to realize it yet."

But due time Tom was brought to the bar on the charge of murder, but on George Hardy's confession he was speedily cleared as was discharged.

Wedding bells finally captured, and while the evidence against him was slight the police scared him into a partial confession. He was charged with complicity at the time John Jackson was killed, but insisted that he had hardly been conscious at the shock ended the old man's life.

"All's well that ends well," said Mr. Navarre when Tom's name was cleared by the confession of Red Sam, and a street car conductor had testified that the person which Tom had lost the eventful evening before he had snatched from the water.

"Now, Pug, what can we do for you?" he asked.

"Well," said Pug, "ye've made me one of de family, an' ye promised to edjycate me in de best way I could choose, but dat'll be enough. But seein' as how I stuck a hat pin t'rough a villain's ribs, I'd like t' do nomethin' t' celebrate it."

"What if you who saved us?" cried Tom. "It was."

"Well, you can order anything you want to for the occasion."

"Den I'd like t' give de kids o' New Jersey a couple o' days at de Coney Island. Den dey'd know I am a real swell."

"Your wish is a command," answered Mr. Navarre, "and we'll all attend."

"Dat's de t'ing!" cried Pug.

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The veterinary surgeon was vaccinating a big Newfoundland dog. The animal was muzzled and an assistant held its head. Suddenly, without a second's pause the sire of a silver dollar was shaven clean on its back and here the virus was being applied. "I chose this spot to work on," said the surgeon, "because the dog can't scratch himself here. If I vaccinated him on the leg he would be apt to irritate the wound and get blood poisoning. The vaccination of dogs is new," he went on, "but it is a very useful thing. I wonder that it was never tried before this year. Many valuable dogs have died from time to time of smallpox. There have, indeed, been cases where whole packs of hounds have contracted the disease and their killing has been necessary. I advocate every pup's vaccination. When dogs take smallpox they take it madly. Their death is nearly always bound to follow. When they recover they are not disfigured, their hair falling the pock marks, but they an seldom recover that this fact hardly counts for much. Vaccination is the thing for valuable dogs."

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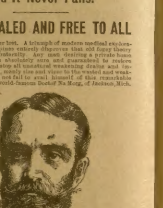

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THE SIGNET RING.

(Continued from page 14, col. 4.)

ting room. Lieutenant Strong and Sergeant Fairfax representing Troop B, while the entire command were drawn up at a short distance in front of the dwelling, awaiting the coming of their Captain and his bride. California Joe, Texas Bill and Calamity Jane were of the witnesses who claimed a kiss from the fair cheek after the ceremony was performed by the magistrate in attendance.

There was no wedding cake, no bridal trousseau, but the bride blushing and happy, despite the recent loss of her father, murmured the words that gave her into the keeping of the young Knight of the Black Hills, while her mother, strangely calm after her recent bereavement, smiled lovingly as the words fell somewhat from the lips of the magistrate.

"I pronounce you man and wife."

And when the wedding was over the bride and her old beautiful mother entered the creaking army wagon and bidding their friends goodby, set out on the first stage of their journey over the rough trail to the encampment of General Crook, far to the northwest on the banks of the Big Horn. By the side of the wagon rode Captain Hethrington, the happiest of all that blue-coated troop that escorted bride and groom on their wedding trip.

(The end.)

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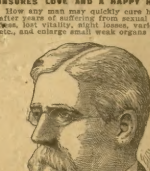
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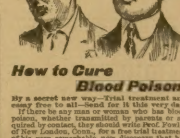

How to Cure Blood Poison.

By a secret new way—Trial treatment and many free books sent to any address. If this very day, if there be any man or woman who has blood poison, whether transmitted by parents or acquired by contact, they should write Prof. Fowler of New London, Conn., for a free trial treatment of his very remarkable new discovery that has caught the wildfire everywhere going so far as to reduce the bones of the nose and ears when they had rotted away by the terrible poison. It is no mercury, or iodide of potash, nothing to urbe and no simple liquid, tablet or pill but has hardly one pound entirely different from anything heretofore known. It is single-like flashing in the blood poison in the primary, secondary or tertiary stage, copper colored spots, swelling of the glands, sores on the parts, pimples, sore throat, swollen genitals, aches, old sores, ulcers, mucous patches in the mouth, loosening of the teeth, hair or eyebrows falling out and all the other symptoms of blood poison. It removes every blemish in a few days and cures permanently in a few weeks and only the blood poison itself but restores the stamina of even the most shattered constitution and so condemns mercury quoting to you the gains of society, marriage and parenthood.

Do not put it off; do not experiment. Satisfy yourself that what the professor says is true by sending name and address today to Prof. F. C. Fowler, Box 821, New London, Conn., and he will send you at once (sealed and free from all marks) a full trial treatment of his discovery absolutely free, together with a valuable treatise "All About Blood Poison and Its Cure," that will tell you many things that will convince you that what he has discovered will cure you, so lose no time in sending your address. Do so today and you will soon be cured.

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$10 will buy 100 Shares of Stock in the **GOLDEN BOY MINING COMPANY.** Par value $1 per share, non-assessable. Full paid, non-assessable.

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This block of stock will not last long, so **SEND NOW.** Don't delay, but write us at once and send in the **$10 AND PAY BIG DIVIDENDS** when ground is developed. Mine is located in the richest part of the Bonanza district of Thunder Mountain, Idaho. Tunnel now in over 100 feet. Ship ment assay $75 to $80 a ton. Money needed for development work and machinery and those who buy stock now will get the benefit of the low price. Don't wait till the stock gets out of reach. $10 buys 100 shares, par value $100. Monthly payments if desired. Write for prospectus. Mr. May and Engineer Rogers, Boise, Idaho, have no stock to sell. Write for free booklet. **UNION SECURITY CO., CHICAGO, ILL.**

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A book about it. Send 50 cents in coin or stamps to W. J. Black, Gen. Pass. Agent, A. T. & S. F. Ry., 1112 Great Northern Building, Chicago, for copy of notable new book entitled "Grand Canyon of Arizona," graphically describing world's greatest scenic wonder.

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"For over nine years I suffered with chronic constipation and during this time I had to take an injection of warm water every 24 hours or else I could have no action on my bowels. Happily I was induced to try, and used, one 25 cent box of Cascarets. Before I had finished the box I was entirely relieved and nearly 4 years have passed without any return of the trouble. I can see this is only all that this marvelous drug can see this is only all that this marvelous drug can see this is behalf of suffering humanity."—R. P. Fisher, Roanoke, Ill.

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FOR YOUTHFUL EYES

In a Grizzly's Clutch.

In the early settlement of California grizzly bears were numerous and troublesome, but few men ever had a more singular experience with a grizzly than Paul Sweet, who kept a tannery near Santa Cruz. The story is told by Mrs. Dall in "My First Holiday."

Mr. Sweet was one day walking alone in the woods, when he came suddenly upon a grizzly bear and her two cubs. He was quite unarmed, and before he had time to consider any plan of action the bear was upon him. She struck him down, but he kept his presence of mind and lay perfectly quiet.

The grizzly stood over him for a minute or more, then raised him by the waistband and began dragging him along. He did not resist, and she dragged him for a dozen rods to a little sandy hollow, where she dropped him and began digging a hole in the sand. Into this hole she rooted the man, and then nosed and plowed the sand over him until he was buried from sight. The prudent animal, not being hungry at that moment, was making a cache for her prey.

Mr. Sweet's heart lightened as he realized the bruin's intentions, and he began to hope that he might escape. He waited a few minutes after the bear had covered him, and then, thinking that she had retired from the scene, he began to work himself free very cautiously. The grizzly was on the watch, however, and at the first movement of her prey rushed to the spot, and with two or three strokes of her paw roughly tucked him again.

Mr. Sweet instantly became motionless again and allowed himself to be reburied in the sand. Luckily he had slipped over his face, so that the sand did not fill his eyes, and by raising his head a little he was able to throw off the sand sufficiently to breathe.

He was more wary next time, and lay still for an hour or two, until he felt pretty sure that the grizzly had retired from the spot. Very cautiously then he worked himself free from the sand and crept away.

It Was All Right.

A party to a little girl, next to Christmas, is the nicest thing in the world. A small miss received an invitation to a playmate's party which read:

"Please come to my party from 3 to 6 o'clock Saturday afternoon."

The playmate's name was signed in her own childish writing at the end.

The little one who had received the invitation could hardly contain herself until Saturday afternoon. As it happened, her mother was about five minutes late in sending her, dressed and curled, from the house. She was much excited over the fact and was ready to cry.

On her return her mother asked: "Well, dear, were you late for the party?"

"No, they hadn't eaten a bite," she promptly replied.

Retribution.

James, 4 years old, had been naughty to the point of evoking a whipping from his long suffering mother, and all day long a desire for revenge rankled in his little bosom.

At length bedtime came, and kneeling beside her, he implored a blessing for each member of the family individually, she alone being conspicuous by her absence. Then rising from his devout posture, the little supplicant fixed a keenly triumphant look upon her face, saying, as he turned to climb into bed:

"I s'pose you noticed you wasn't in it."

Willing to Be Generous.

Mother—Oh, you cruel boy! You are making your brother cry.

Algernon—No, mummy, I'm not. I'm only sharing my cod-liver oil with him, wot you said was so nice.

A Synonym.

Teacher—What is a synonym, Freddie?

Freddie—A synonym is a word to be used in place of another word you can't spell.

IN NONSENSE LAND.

BY CAROLINE WELLS.

A little girl lived in Nonsense Land,
So she carried her house around in her hand.
She wore a lantern on her head,
And rode to town in a feather bed.

The little girl's name was Kippity Kee;
Instead of one apron she always wore three.

For in Nonsense Land, you never can tell,
She might lose two of them down the well.

Now Kippity Kee had a brother big.
Whose beautiful name was Grumpery Jig;
And he said to his sister, one windy day,
"I'm sick for a sail in Woggly Wood."

They sailed away in a paper ark;
And on Woggly Wood was awfully dark.
They hung jack o' lanterns on all the trees,
While made the place as light as you please.

They sailed till they came to Boggly Bay,
And there, of course, took a sleigh,
And rode as fast as they could go,
Straight to the home of Pankery Bo.

Now Pankery Bo was a deaf old Bear,
Who sat all day in a rocking chair;
He gave the children each a fig,
A poppy pie and a guinea pig.

But as they turned to go away,
They found a cat had eaten their sleigh,
So of course they stayed until afternoon,
And then went home in the Blue Balloon.

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Contains 160 pages. Over 1907 Cuts. Tells how to get best book paper, with free colored plates true to life. Gives the Diseases of Poultry, their Causes, Symptoms and remedies. Diagrams with full directions for making Poultry Houses, Brooders, Trap Nests, Leg Bands, Leg Rings, Poultry Markers, Killing Knives, Leg Spurs, Leg Scales, Egg Tester, Egg Boxes, Egg Carriers, Egg Preservatives, Egg Dyes, Egg Stamps, Egg Record Books, Egg Scales, Egg Cartons, Egg Crates, Egg Cases, Egg Baskets, Egg Trays, Egg Shippers, Egg Packers